THE LIFE OF CHRIST

É. LE CAMUS

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THE LIFE OF CHRIST

VOLUME III

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THE
LIFE OF CHRIST

By

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Translated by

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VOLUME III

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MEANWHILE the new moon of Nisan had appeared in the heavens. Fires on the mountains and emissaries over the country made the official announcement that in fourteen days Israel would celebrate the Paschal feast. Every one hailed with joy the almost imperceptible crescent of the reappearing luminary, and made ready to solemnise the memory of the wonders achieved at the time of the departure out of Egypt. Caravans began to organise; the people grouped themselves by families; and, that they might reach Jerusalem soon enough to be enabled to purify themselves before the feast, they set out on their journey

without delay, that is, about the fourth day of the moon, towards the close of March, or in the first days of April. The weather at this season was already pleasant. The last rains had ceased and, underneath a perpetually clear sky, the sun with its rays was strengthening the first flowers of spring. Everything contributed to make the journey to the Holy City an undertaking of religious joy.

At the loud acclaim with which the people hailed the approach of the Paschal feasts, Jesus, Who was in one of the cities of Peræa, must have felt His heart gripped with sorrow. For them the Passover meant life; for Him, it portended death. Of old, Isaac may have wondered where the victim was, as he climbed the mountain of offering, but our Lord was not unaware that He was going to be the true Lamb of the approaching sacrifice. The hour noted by the prophet, wherein the abomination would be set up in the holy place, had struck, and these crowds of pilgrims, who sang their sacred canticles as they passed, must have appeared to Him like so many witnesses going up to Jerusalem to see with their own eyes whether He would be true to the contract in which, for so many centuries, both divine justice and human malice had engaged Him. Interrupting His evangelical ministry, the Master, Who was then on the high-road followed by the caravans, at once began the journey at the end of which He beheld the Cross.

The Gospel does not expressly say what struggle took place in His soul at that moment. It was like a foretaste of the agony of Gethsemane. According to St. Mark,[1] the disciples were able to judge from His appearance that He had just reached a supreme and terrible determination.

[1] *St. Mark* x, 32.

He walked alone, at the head of the group of Apostles, with the intrepid air of a chief advancing to the combat, or rather, of a hero who gives himself up for the safety of all. The Apostles followed Him, silent and depressed, and the multitude, not knowing what to think, experienced a vague feeling of fear. Solemn situations, after astonishing for a moment, end by frightening those who are not in possession of the secret.

It was strange; were it not for that reflection of deep sadness which they saw on the Master's brow, the disciples would have readily abandoned their hearts to joy. According to their personal knowledge, everything was favourable for the Messianic cause, and they were auguring happy events soon to come. If they were advancing towards the enemy in going up to Jerusalem, they were not advancing alone. A multitude of Galileans enthusiastic and fearless, who had been gained over to the Messiah's cause, preceded or followed them. Besides, the result of the disciples' mission had been a consolation. Everywhere town and country were aroused. Israel was seeking its Christ, and the Christ was approaching the Holy City, drawing men by the charm of His goodness, His grace, and His might. It was in truth the hour of God.

Not to allow them to linger longer in this seductive prospect, Jesus determined to share with them the painful thoughts of His soul. They were dreaming of triumphs, and His eyes were fixed upon His coming sorrow; they were wondering what their throne should be like, and He saluted, in advance, His Cross. Taking them aside, in order not to scandalise the multitude, He began to tell them, this time without figures, the conditions under which He hoped to attain universal Kingship.

"Behold," He says, "we go up to Jerusalem, and all things shall be accomplished which are written by the

prophets concerning the Son of Man." If their faith could be shaken by the events of the future, the thought that these have been foreseen and foretold must sustain it. The history of the Passion, unfolded in the very order traced by the prophets of old, shall prove the Messianic character of Jesus instead of endangering it. More significant still and no less conclusive is the fact that He Himself is going to describe even in its minutest details that which His enemies are preparing for Him, and thus prove that He has had not only the merit of seeing the future, but the courage to face it though knowing it. "The Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him and spit on Him, and scourge Him and kill Him." One would say it was an oracle after the event, so full, so exact, so detailed is it. Each separate step of His dolorous way is insisted upon, from the perfidy of Judas, who sells the Son of Man, to the folly of the Jews, who betray their Messiah to the Gentiles; from the ignominy of the derision and the scourges of the flagellation down to the death on the Cross. This, indeed, is His humiliation.

But His rehabilitation is noted likewise. After the prophecy of abasement comes the prophecy of glory. "And the third day He shall rise again." It is brief, but decisive. The last word of the conflict shall not, then, belong to His enemies. They may humiliate Him unto death, but He shall rise again to life, to inaugurate His eternal sovereignty.

The disciples, on hearing these declarations, were beyond themselves. They were disturbed as much in mind as in heart. This ignominious treatment could not be squared with their entirely human notions of the Messianic triumph. They were unable to reconcile these two ex-

tremes.[2] Even the resurrection, after a disgraceful death, seemed to them impossible, and they wondered if there were in the Master's words aught else than a series of images announcing, in metaphor, the near approach of the Kingdom of God. In any case they preferred to fix their minds on the last words of His discourse rather than on the first. After all, Jesus shall be the Conqueror, and it is then, no doubt, that amid universal acclamation He will inaugurate the palingenesis of which He spoke not long ago. This prospect raised their spirits, and renewed all the ambitions of the Apostolic group.

It was at this moment that a woman among those who followed Jesus, or coming with the caravans from Galilee, took advantage of the privileged position of her two sons among the disciples and also of her personal devotion to the Master, to give utterance to a request, the artless exigency of which only a mother's love can explain. It was Salome, the wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John. St. Mark supposes that the petition was addressed to Jesus by the two brothers. But St. Matthew, preserving a very important feature in his narration, expressly says that the mother herself spoke. On her lips the request is less odious than in the mouth of her sons. Whatever the personal ambition or even the mere affection which the latter may have entertained for the Master, they should still preserve some modesty in evincing their sentiments. After all the discourses they had heard on the punishment of those who seek the foremost places, for themselves to demand the first and second in the new Kingdom would hardly have been wise. At bottom, however, it was indeed their desire to obtain this twofold favour. Slow to

[2] *St. Luke* xviii, 34. The words in themselves were quite intelligible, but they had so confused their own ideas that they would not and could not understand. The Evangelist employs nearly the same terms as in ix, 45, after a similar declaration: τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο κεκρυμμένον.

express it themselves, they had judged that their mother would be an excellent advocate in this emergency. They had no difficulty in filling her mind with the subject, and, full of her mission, she went to the Master. Her sons followed her [3] to support her petition.

They selected a moment when Jesus was alone. For we shall see that, after the incident, He summons the Apostles to give them His advice concerning the law of humble equality which must govern His Church. Salome, with all the respect she was capable of, prostrated herself before Him, thus meaning that she had a request to prefer. "What wilt thou?" said Jesus. "Say that these my two sons," the mother replied, without further oratorical preface, "may sit one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left in thy Kingdom." This was not only desiring the best portion, but also demanding it at the expense of the rest. For, at that rate, Peter already appointed first by Jesus, would be at the most only third. They were above all labouring under the greatest illusion as to the establishment of the new Kingdom. This was about to be founded amid perils, blood, and with a conflict unto death, and hence there could be no question of sitting therein at once in the comfort which victory affords. One's place there must be fought for, not begged. Salome deceives herself in serving as interpreter for the foolish ambitions of her sons. They have not perceived whither their ambition tends, and they deserve this retort from Jesus: "Ye know not what ye ask. Can ye drink the chalice that I shall drink; or be baptised with the baptism wherewith I am baptised?" [4] It was the custom among the ancients, during the feast, for the head of the house to offer his

[3] They even speak when the time comes. According to *St. Matt.* xx, 22 and *St. Mark* x, 39, they cry out: Δυνάμεθα, "we can."

[4] St. Mark (x, 38) uses the present πίνω and βαπτίζομαι, because in reality the sacrifice is already long since begun for Jesus, and is going on

own cup containing the draught to the guests on his right and left. Even to-day in the East, by a similar procedure,[5] they show their affection for the guests they wish to honour. Since James and John look upon the Kingdom of God as a banquet, think they that they are able to share the cup prepared for the Master? This cup is no other than the chalice of divine wrath destined for sinners by eternal justice, and which Jesus will drain in the name of all mankind. The first banquet set forth in the new Kingdom shall be that of woe. Who shall desire a place there? They alone who know not what is to happen there. For Himself, Man-God though He is, He trembles at the mere thought of so cruel a test. Grief shall penetrate not only His inner organism like a drink, but also His whole body like a baptism. Such is the real inauguration of His Kingdom. By this the beginning is to be made. The period of eternal glory shall come only afterwards.

Heedful rather to their enthusiasm than to the counsels of prudent modesty, the two brothers affirm that they are able to drink the chalice. Alas, Peter and the others, too, would also declare that they would follow the Master even unto death, and their protestations did not withstand even the word of a woman, nor the first approach of danger. Jesus, Who knows the worth of this affirmation, adds: "Ye shall indeed drink of the chalice that I drink of: and with the baptism wherewith I am baptised, ye shall be baptised. But to sit on my right or left hand is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is

every day. St. Matthew (xx, 24) prefers *μέλλω πίνειν*, having in mind especially the final sacrifice.

[5] Thus, when a sheik, in Egypt, Galilee, or Syria received us at table, he nearly always made it his duty either to drink first himself of the glass which he offered us, or to mix carefully with his hands the balls of rice and meat which he gave to us as a sign of friendship.

prepared by My Father." This response has given rise to theological difficulties from the time of Arius. Predestinarianism has also endeavoured to derive from this text an argument in favour of its views. May we not accept it simply as a courteous and prudent way of refusing to the two brothers what they could not possibly have deserved? For, although they reply that they are willing to share the Master's combats, the Master knows that they are unable to do so, and concludes that He is right in telling them that He Himself can do nothing to fulfil their desires. It was for them to act and not to promise, and thus they would justify their claims. The Son cannot grant as a favour places which the Father's justice reserves for merit alone. The most valiant shall be first; the field is open to all; it remains for each one to set himself to work.[6]

So the project of the mother and her two sons failed completely. When the other Apostles were informed of it, they showed themselves indignant. Jesus took occasion from this incident to address them a beautiful lesson of wisdom. With His customary kindness, ever ready to correct their caprices, He gathers them about Him and says: "You know that they who seem to rule over the Gentiles, lord it over them; and their princes have power over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever will be the greater shall be your minister, and whosoever will be first among you shall be the servant of all."

The difference between the kingdoms of the world and

[6] Our Lord's reply may also be understood in the sense that God's grace has predestined two others to occupy those places, and that what has already been fixed by the divine decree cannot be countermanded. But in this explanation the scope of human liberty and the value of personal merit are less evident. It might even appear that there is something fatal in the destinies of men; whereas our Lord seeks to indicate that, in His new Kingdom, everything must be attained by co-operation with grace, and that nothing is given to simple preference or through human favour.

that of God is that, in the one, the primacy is gained by force, and, consequently, is maintained by force; in the other, it is obtained through love, and is sustained by love. Moreover, in human society the public power has for its object the imposing of the authority which is its safeguard; in the Christian Church, the power has the special mission of creating, of increasing life by the Apostolate and by devotion. In her, the individual conscience is sufficient guarantee of order through sanctity. Hence to ask to be first in the Church is to ask not to sit on a throne in command, but to set the hand to work; it is to wish not to reign amid earthly honours and pleasures, but to annihilate and to sacrifice one's self for the common good; it is not to feed upon the flock, but to feed the flock itself. This is what Jesus means, and what He admirably explains by setting Himself before them as an example. "For the Son of man," He says, "is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption [7] for many." He has given it for all, as is said in other passages, but all have not profited thereby. In reality, He has redeemed only those who have desired to be redeemed; they are many, but they are not all mankind. At the foot of the cross, there shall always be some traitors and some blasphemers. It is from His humiliation and death that Jesus will derive the legitimacy of His power over the world. When, after the severe labours of a life passed in the spreading of truth, in the suppressing of evil, in the transforming of souls, He shall be stretched on the infamous gibbet in payment of the ransom of mankind, giving up His life for His people, He shall deserve to have His

[7] The expiatory sacrifice of Jesus is here clearly defined. He gives His soul or His life together with His blood as the price demanded, λύτρον, for the redemption of those who are lost. The word ἀντὶ indicates the substitution of the ransom for the prisoners who are liberated through Jesus' sacrifice.

title of royalty inscribed above His head, in the three languages of the world. By His sacrifice He shall be King. There shall be no other kings in His Church but those generous souls who are capable of imitating His self-denial and of offering themselves as victims.

CHAPTER II

JESUS IN JERICHO

The Two Roads Through Peræa—Past and Present —An Ovation—The Healing of the Blind Men— —Zacheus—The Parable of the Pounds—Leave-taking. (St. Matthew xx, 29–34; St. Luke xviii, 35; xix, 28; St. Mark x, 46–56.)

To reach Jerusalem by way of Peræa there were two ways: the one, more direct, but more difficult, followed here the winding banks of the Jordan, there the rocky heights that overhang them; the other, and the more frequented one, described a curve to the east as far as Gerasa, and was longer, but less wearisome. Both started from Gadara, and joined again not far from Beth-Nimra, the ancient headquarters of the tribe of Gad.

After leaving Beth-Nimra the two roads joined, and from there on formed only one, turning directly towards Judæa. First crossing the Jordan, after about two hours' journey across little white and yellow sand-hills rising in parallel lines, like long-forgotten tents of the sons of Israel, one reached the pleasant, smiling oasis of Jericho.

It would be difficult to-day for one sitting among the ruins of the ancient tower of Er-Rikha, to rebuild, however strong the effort of imagination, the great memories of the past that lie fallen in this little plain. The two structures recently built for the reception of

pilgrims have not lessened its desolate aspect. Instead of the wealthy city, which, after Jerusalem, was the foremost of the five toparchy capitals in Palestine,[1] and which measured twenty stadia in circumference, one sees but a miserable group of huts covered with branches of trees, beneath which the traveller hesitates to take shelter. Four Bashi-bazouks maintain order among a population of three hundred Bedouins whose aspect is wild and forbidding. The great palms have disappeared, and of the beautiful rose-trees celebrated by our Holy Books there remained not a trace. A few trees covered with thorns, *seders* and *zakoums*, great hedges of bushes, have succeeded the rich vegetation of olden times. The fountain of Eliseus alone remains;[2] but its waters run to waste and enrich only lands that have for ages been neglected. In the time of Jesus, they flowed in all directions, thanks to well-arranged canals whose ruined aqueducts still mark their location. This delightful valley was the paradise of Judæa, as the land of Genesareth was of Galilee. Situated, like the Dead Sea, though somewhat higher, six hundred feet below the level of the sea, it saw growing in its exceptionally happy climate all the fruits of the tropics. Amid its forests of palms, enriched by the balm which it gathered from its trees, intoxicated with the perfume of its roses,[3] Jericho, with its amphitheatre, its hippodrome, its fortified towers, was like a queen seated in an oasis of delight.[4]

In all times travellers were pleased to halt beneath its

[1] Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiv, 5, 4; *B. J.*, iii, 3, 5; Pliny, *H. N.*, v, 14.

[2] *IV Kings* ii, 10–22.

[3] *Pliny, H. N.*, v, 15: "Hiericuntem palmetis consitam, fontibus irriguam." *Eccles.* xxiv, 18, speaks of its rose-plant; *Deuter.* xxxiv, 3, of its palm-trees; comp. *Judges* i, 16; iii, 13. The name Jericho signified the City of the Moon, or again the City of Sweet Odours.

[4] See Josephus' beautiful descriptions: *Antiq.*, xiv, 4, 1; xv, 4, 2; *B. J.*, iv, 8, 3; i, 6, 6, etc.

walls. It was the meeting-place where the caravans were arranged in the order of pilgrimage, before setting out for Jerusalem.

When Jesus arrived there, a great multitude was following Him. It was composed, no doubt, of many groups of pilgrims who had met at the crossing of the river and had deemed it an honour to escort the young Prophet. This numerous train was advancing amid most enthusiastic clamour. Not far from the gates of the city, two blind men were seated by the roadside begging charity of passers-by.[5] As they heard the increasing tumult they inquired its cause.[6] The answer must have been that Jesus

[5] St. Mark and St. Luke say that the blind man was begging, προσαιτῶν. While adopting the plural as given by St. Matthew, in order to give a full account, we maintain the data of the other two concerning the profession of the subjects of the miracle.

[6] In the narration of this incident, preserved by the entire Synoptic tradition, there are two divergencies which show with undeniable clearness the perfect independence of our Evangelists. They concern the number of the blind men healed, and the place where the cure was effected. For, St. Matthew says that there were two blind men; St. Mark and St. Luke mention but one. Again, St. Luke declares that the miracle took place before He entered the city, and the other two relate that Jesus performed it as He was leaving. However, even though this divergency could not be explained away, nothing of importance can result from it, except against the system of absolute accuracy of authors inspired in the smallest details. The truth of the miracle would remain none the less together with all its importance.

The attempts at solving this twofold difficulty have been so numerous that the series of possible and impossible hypotheses seems to be finally exhausted. Some have thought that there were four blind men cured, and that we ought not to confound three absolutely distinct narrations. This explanation does not suffer close scrutiny. For, in that case, Jesus must have gone out of the city twice and the scene must have transpired three times in the same circumstances and with the same words. Others admit only two different cures of two blind men, one before entering the city, the other on leaving. In this case, St. Matthew must have united the two events in one narration; but he would again have been mistaken in having these two men healed in the same place and at the same time, whereas they came on different occasions. Some have sought to explain St. Luke's words: ἐν τῷ ἐγγίζειν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἰεριχώ, in a general sense: *when He was near Jericho*, without saying whether it was before He entered or after He left the city. But this is impossible, since, immediately after the miracle, St. Luke shows us Jesus *entering* the city: καὶ εἰσελθὼν. Paulus has pretended that the pilgrims, ranged in order of procession, were so numer-

of Nazareth, Son of David and Messiah of Israel, was passing. Immediately one of them, Bartimeus, who seems to have made himself particularly remarkable by his demonstration of faith, and perhaps, also, by the part he took in the early Church, began to cry out: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" His companion in misfortune did likewise. The first movement of an enthusiastic crowd is always to show itself pitiless towards those who disturb its manifestations. In this instance the spontaneous ovation with which they were receiving the Master had assumed the character of a religious march, and the cries of the blind men disturbed its harmony. The crowd was especially eager not to mar its order, and this would be done should Jesus stop to heal the two unfortunates. Every one, therefore, made an effort to silence them; but their desire to be cured was stronger than any injunction, and they cried out with increased energy: "O Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us!" Jesus, moved by this persistent and courageous prayer, halted. "Bring them here," He commanded to those around Him. This word

ous that the foremost groups had already gone out of the city when the last were hardly entering. Thus, while remaining within the bounds of truth, St. Luke could have said that they were entering, and the two others that they were leaving, at the moment when the miracle took place, since the entering and the departing were simultaneous.

However it may be, one cannot help remarking that here again, as in the deliverance of the demoniac of Gergesa, it is St. Matthew who gives the plural instead of the singular. Here again, as in the case of the demoniacs, some have endeavoured to explain that one of those miraculously cured was better known than the other for his faith, and, perhaps, for his part in the primitive Church. As for the place where the cure was effected, the three Synoptics would agree were it admitted that there were two cities in Jericho, the ancient and the modern. The scene of the blind men, placed between the two, would have occurred on leaving the one and entering the other. But the true theory of the inspiration of the sacred authors does not make such far-fetched and really unnatural solutions obligatory. At all events St. Mark is the only one of the three Synoptics who knows the name of Bartimeus, and relates the incident with very vivid details. He had received it in this dramatic form from the lips of Peter.

at once changed the dispositions of the multitude with regard to the two supplicants. Since the Master was determined to consecrate His improvised triumph with a miracle, there was nothing to do but to let Him proceed. The universal enthusiasm could not but gain by it. "Be of better comfort," they said to the nearer of the two blind men. "Arise, He calleth thee." Directly, Bartimeus [7] threw aside the cloak in which he crouched, and as if he could already see, hastened without fear of falling towards Jesus Who summoned him. The other came also, and the Master, looking at them both, said: "What will ye that I do to you?" "Lord, that our eyes be opened." On the instant, touching their eyes, He said to each of them: "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath made thee whole." Their eyes were in truth opened; and, filled with gratitude, the two thus miraculously healed joined the procession glorifying God with all their strength. This time Jesus did not enjoin silence on the subjects of the miracle.

The multitude, who required not this incident to celebrate the glories of the Galilean Prophet, immediately let their joy and admiration burst forth more noisily than ever. Their shouts of gratitude rose towards heaven, and Our Lord no longer protested, as He did formerly, against these pious and lawful demonstrations. The time had come for the cry to go forth from everything: "Welcome to the Son of David!" and if men had seen fit to hold their peace, as He shall soon say Himself, the stones would have essayed to speak in their stead.

Meanwhile there was great excitement throughout the city; the people hastened in curiosity to those points where the procession would have to pass. Every one wished to

[7] It is, perhaps, by this burst of faith, as much as by his personal notoriety, that Bartimeus overshadowed his companion in the memories of early tradition.

see the young Prophet with his own eyes, and succeeded only with difficulty, so great was the crowd.

Among the most eager and the least fortunate, in spite of many efforts, was a man [8] whose life was notoriously reprehensible, but whose soul, naturally upright, was not indifferent to the grave problems of the religious question. This was Zacheus, a chief of the tax-gatherers.[9] The custom-house was of considerable importance in Jericho. Here was the frontier of Judæa and the entrance of Peræa: two provinces under separate jurisdictions, administered one by the Romans, the other by Herod. The great caravans of merchants on the way from Syria to Egypt passed there every day. The tolls of transit, therefore, gave rise to a revenue already very large, but there was, in particular, the tax on the products of the country to be collected, and especially on the balm, which was, according to the avowal of the ancients, the best in the whole world. Hence the large number of fiscal agents gathered in this city. Zacheus, Jew by birth though he was, as his name indicates,[10] held there the post of chief director. If this position had enabled him to make a great fortune, it had only the more surely gained him the discredit and hatred of his compatriots. Having already heard the popular talk of Jesus, of His extraordinary works, and of His benevolence for publicans, he was eagerly desirous of seeing Him as He passed. Unfortunately he was too small in stature, and the eager crowd

[8] This incident is not found in St. Matthew nor in St. Mark. Although St. Luke wrote with his own characteristic gifts of style (vers. 4, 7, 9), he nevertheless shows traces of the Aramaic source from which he received it, *e. g.* verse 1 *et seq.*, the succession of καί's which he employs, and ὀνόματι καλούμενος, which recalls ὃς καλεῖται τῷ ὀνόματι, in i, 61.

[9] The title of ἀρχιτελώνης means one of the chiefs of the custom-house who corresponded directly with the general Roman tax-farmers of whom we have spoken elsewhere.

[10] Zakkaï was a Hebrew name signifying the *Just*, the *Pure*. (*Esdr.* ii, 9; *Nehem.*, vii, 14; Josephus, *Autob.*, 46.)

made it impossible for him to satisfy his curiosity. With that guilelessness of manners which common people often retain, even when the world has enriched them without making them proud, Zacheus hastened to get a sure start of the procession, and to climb up into a sycamore tree, whence overlooking the crowd, he could see everything at his ease. The great avenues of cities in the East are often lined with these trees, whose low branches parallel with the road, furnish the people, on public holidays, with privileged places from which they might see well.

On seeing him in this position, the crowd to whom he was well known owing to his occupation, manifested, perhaps, their joyous surprise, uttered his name, and began to repeat in the hearing of Jesus, in a few uncharitable words, his whole history. But Our Saviour Himself was not unacquainted with this lost sheep; and as, in His omniscience, He had called Nathanael, seated under the fig-tree, so He deemed it fitting to call Zacheus from his place on the sycamore. When He drew opposite the tree from which the publican was observing Him, He raised His eyes, and with that goodness which is ever ready to anticipate repentant hearts: "Zacheus," He said, "make haste and come down; for this day I must [11] abide in thy house." Great and singularly sweet must have been the publican's surprise as he heard these words! He desired only to see the Master pass, and he was invited to give Him lodging! In all haste he came down; and in transports of joy conducted Our Lord towards his dwelling, the honours of which he was to give Him.

As was to be expected, this sudden determination on the part of the young Prophet did not please everybody. The hierarchical party was largely represented in Jericho.

[11] The δεῖ, *must*, employed here by Jesus, reveals the providential order according to which salvation comes to Zacheus.

Elsewhere we have seen that the priests and Levites were glad to fix their residence in this city, so near to Jerusalem. From there they betook themselves periodically to the Temple for the fulfilment of their functions. The arrival of Jesus, with such an outburst, could not but excite their jealous hate. They easily made capital of the incident with Zacheus, and breathed among the people the evil spirit that animated them. Hence is it said that the crowd was scandalised and murmured on seeing the Master take up His quarters in the house of a publican. The people easily pass from wonderment to injustice. It does not appear, however, that this movement of disapproval was profound, whether it be that the Saviour's authority was superior to the calumnies of His adversaries, or that the hope of seeing a public sinner return to God justified, in the eyes of the most wise, His courageous resolution.

For Zacheus was visibly overwhelmed by the words which the Master addressed him, and the signal honour which He did him. Grace is quick to work wonders, however little man yields to its solicitations. Although conducting his guest in triumph, the publican was not indifferent to the murmurings of the crowd. His decision is taken. He will not let Jesus enter his house without having given Him in the presence of them all the assurance that He is coming to the home of a man henceforth honest and transformed by the most sincere repentance. He does not intend that the Master shall eat at his table, with any scruple, a bread reputed to be the fruit of culpable exactions. Still less does he wish Him to be blamed for his generous charity. Halting, therefore, at the threshold of his dwelling, as if to face[12] the accusations with which they pursue him and to defend Jesus while defending him-

[12] This seems to be implied in the text: σταθεὶς δὲ, κ. τ. λ.

self: "Behold, Lord," he says, with the assurance of a man making known an heroic resolution, "the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold." Nothing could be more categorical than this statement. He makes two parts of his fortune: one he prudently keeps for his family, the other he generously gives to the poor; and for fear that they may doubt the fulfilment of his promise, he speaks not in the future: *I shall give*, but in the present, *I give*. The poor, then, have, first of all, profited by this visit of the Saviour. The rich, for their part, shall lose nothing. Zacheus is going to examine his whole life carefully, and if he discovers any injustices, they shall be generously repaired. Should any one even think himself wronged, let him present himself at once, let him speak; justice shall be done to his claims. Therefore no more scandal for any one; whatever his past, the publican from this day forth is an honest man. The sheep returns to the fold. Who could be distressed by that?

Jesus feels this triumph of grace deeply, and, wishing to share His satisfaction with those around Him, He says to them, as He looks on Zacheus in the noble attitude which he has just assumed before the multitude and in view of his duty: "This day is salvation come to this house; because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." In all probability, it was during the afternoon that Jesus made His entrance into Jericho. He passed the evening and the night with His [13] host, completing by His discourses what grace had so happily begun.

Meanwhile the whole city was filled with the event of the day. The Messiah of the Jews at length revealed Himself.

[13] This is implied in *St. Luke* xix, 5, σήμερον . . . . δεῖ με μεῖναι, and 7, εἰσῆλθεν καταλῦσαι.

It was said that He was going up to Jerusalem to have Himself crowned theocratic king. It was the beginning of the new era. If the disciples, in spite of all of the Master's observations, felt themselves borne on irresistibly to look for the inauguration of an earthly kingdom, what must not the illusions of the multitude have been? When Jesus sought to depart on the following day, He found Himself confronted by an entire people excited, transported, misled by human hopes.[14] Deploring their error and desirous of preparing them for the scandal of His death, He began, as a farewell discourse, to announce to them under the veil of a parable, His departure and His return, His death and His resurrection. If they who surround Him are still ignorant of this, it is time for them to learn it: He is advancing not to triumph, but to the torture. There shall be no deception when the catastrophe comes. Instead of being discouraged, every true disciple must arouse his faith to greater liveliness, and strengthen that of the others. His absence shall not be long. On His return, He will see what each one has done with the truth and with the graces of which he was the depositary. Then only shall His reign really commence, and then also the intelligent and devoted servants shall receive, as reward, a special authority in the new religious society. Such is the general meaning of the parable of the pounds which the Master began to relate.

" A certain nobleman," He said, " went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." We might see here an evident allusion to the contemporary history of the Jews, did we not know from other sources the little love that Jesus had for political affairs. Archelaus had kept royal residence in Jericho, and Jesus' hear-

[14] *St. Luke* xix, 11

ers had not forgotten that this prince, after the death of his father, Herod the Great, had gone to Rome to have his father's will confirmed, and to demand the investiture of the states that were bequeathed to him. During his journey his subjects had recourse to diplomacy and had begged Augustus to deliver them from so hateful a domination, by constituting himself their immediate sovereign.

Here, the man of noble origin is Jesus, Son of David, as the people shout on seeing Him pass, but also, Son of God, and God like His Father. He undertakes a long journey, for it is through the mysteries of death and in another world that He is to go to claim the solemn investiture of His royalty. However, His absence shall not be long; He will only go and come. His faithful shall have only a few days to await Him.

On departing, the lord in the parable desired to put to a test the fidelity and intelligence of his friends, and to learn what administrative office he could assign to each one when he should return with the royal crown. Having, therefore, called his ten servants together, he gave them ten pounds, one to each, and said: "Trade till I come." [15] This portion of His property which Jesus leaves to His disciples is nothing else than the knowledge of religious truth, the power to defend and to communicate it. Doubtless this knowledge is not yet complete. The power of convincing, which is intrusted to them, is, perhaps, very feeble. But what matter! they have received a spark; the

[15] Some, judging that a *mina*, which we translate pound, was a slender deposit intrusted to each servant, have supposed that the Aramaic text from which St. Luke derived this information, had, not *manim* or *maneh*, *mina*, but *manot* or *manah*, portion. In this case it would be a tenth part of his seignorial property that he confided to each depositary. But there is nothing to authorise this supposition, and, besides, it is not at all necessary to know the exact value of a μνᾶ. These are unimportant details in a parable. Jesus wishes to signify here, by the sum intrusted, only the first graces of the apostolate in the rudimentary state. Thus He Himself judges as of little value, ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ, the deposit in question.

Master will see what they shall make of it while awaiting His return.

The prince departed then on his journey. "But his citizens hated him, and they sent an embassage after him, saying: We will not have this man to reign over us." These are the very words which the Jews pronounce a few days later before Pilate: "Crucify Him; we have no king but Cæsar." But these clamourings of hatred cannot prevent the prince from obtaining the crown he deserves. "And it came to pass that he returned, having received the kingdom; and he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money; that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."

So, Jesus returning from His journey in the dark regions of death, and definitely inaugurating His reign at Pentecost, shall wish to know, first of all, what use His disciples have made of the gifts confided to them. To them it had been given to see the Master near at hand, to certify the fulfilment of the prophecies, and to have a special grace for the preaching of the Gospel. Shall this have served them in developing the faith of the multitudes after His death and while awaiting His return? Or shall they have been so unfortunate as to have buried the treasure received, and so neglected the Master's dearest interests?

The first servant, having come, said: "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." This believer had gained over ten believers more, and he had communicated to the souls of ten brethren the light he had himself received. "Well done, thou good servant," said the Master; "because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities." His office in the Church shall be in proportion to the zeal which he has evinced during the absence of his Lord.

The second who presents himself, has gained five pounds in money; he shall be placed over five cities. The honours of the new kingdom shall in every case be distributed according to the intelligent success and to the care bestowed upon the Master's interests.

Finally, there comes another servant, who forms a singular contrast with the first: "Lord," he says, "behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin;[16] for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest that which thou didst not sow."[17] Thus under a most impertinent tone and a most cruel insult he thought to shelter his discomfiture and his laziness. This is the history of every one who has received abundant graces, and yet has chosen to obey his own passions; he seeks an excuse in the difficulties of duty, in the exactions of the law-giver, in the danger of ill-using heavenly gifts; but the truest reason is found in his cowardice and sloth.

Therefore the master silences him with a personal argument which he cannot elude: "Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping that which I did not sow; and why then didst thou not give thy money into the bank, that at my coming I might have exacted it with usury?" If he knew the hard and selfish character of the Master, he should have declined the honour of working for Him, and resigned his office of

[16] The text has it *sudary*. The custom among the poorer classes of using a linen cloth or handkerchief in which carefully to tie up their money that it may not be lost, is well known.

[17] It is difficult to explain the motive which the wicked servant alleges here in excusing his inactivity. Does he mean that his master is in the habit of claiming what he did not give, in demanding not only the amount intrusted but also its product? Many believe so. But it seems more natural to conclude that he did not invest the money because he knew that, in case the investment failed, his master might seek to indemnify himself out of his own personal property.

preacher and evangelist into the hands of the Church. To be sure, to hand over to another the capital which he should have made productive himself, would not have been very meritorious, but after all it would be logical for one who was unwilling to take any risk for his master. The king must know on whom he can count for the defence of his interests. He who wishes to hold aloof must let him know. This is equivalent to saying that Jesus does not recognise the lukewarm as His friends. Resolutely devoted or resolutely opposed, this is how He wishes to find those who have come to Him.

The danger which the servant uses as a pretext, of losing that which he had received while seeking to make it fructify, was not grave. The divine seed may be exposed to every wind; in the end it will even so find a soil ready to receive it. In any case, if it perish, it perishes for the Master. The effort, and consequently the merit of the servant endures in spite of his failure. The worst that can happen to the apostle shall be to exhaust his life in the labour. The deposit which he shall have sought to make bear fruit at any price, enriched by his sacrifice, shall produce a hundredfold, and the Master will be pleased. Let coward souls refuse a mission beyond their valour, but let them not hide from it, and let them avow their sloth; else the Son of Man shall treat these false heroes as their hypocritical fidelity deserves. "Take the pound away from him," He will say, "and give it to him that hath ten pounds." In vain shall any one tell Him that there is something surprising in this sentence. "But I say to you," the king replies, "that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him." Such is the terrible judgment of God upon those to whom He had intrusted a special mission in the Church.

They have produced nothing for others, nothing shall be done even for them. The faith which they have been unwilling to spread shall be extinguished in their own hearts; the grace which they should have made fruitful in their apostolate shall be sterile, and those hands, at first destined by divine mercy to bear the sceptre, shall be condemned by eternal justice to carry the chains of slavery. The valiant, on the contrary, shall see the field confided to their zeal spreading wider and wider. The more the apostle devotes himself to the service of God, the more God opens the horizon before his eyes. Like Francis Xavier in an ecstasy before the nations that God gives to him to evangelise, he cries out: "More, more."

"But as for those my enemies," added the king, "who would not have me to reign over them, bring them hither, and kill them before me." Such is the judgment of the Jewish people, after the judgment of the slothful disciple. The punishment of each is according to the gravity of his fault.

If, among His followers, there are some who, after Calvary, fear to preach His divinity, and to prove it by the prophecies, by His works and words, by His resurrection, their names shall be unheard and their faith shall be wrecked. Others, on the contrary, even late comers like Paul and Barnabas, shall be made princes of the Church here below, first, and later, above, under the high suzerainty of the King Jesus.

As for Judaism, it shall vanish in its malice. The rebellious people shall fall beneath the blows of Roman armies, and the judgment of the Son of Man, imposing His empire upon the whole world, shall be carried out in full.

Such is the future. They must not expect any different from this. If Jesus had desired to have Zacheus under-

stand that, having received the light of the Gospel, he was to spread it bravely later on, we may believe that the lesson was not lost. According to a very old tradition in the East, the chief of the publicans, after having been St. Peter's disciple, became Bishop of Cæsarea.[18]

[18] See in St. Clement, *Hom.*, iii, 63; and *Recogn.*, i, 72; ii, 19.

CHAPTER III

IN BETHANY

POPULAR REGARD IN JERUSALEM—AT THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE LEPER—THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX—THE HOMAGE OF MARY MAGDALEN—JUDAS—THE MASTER'S LESSON—"PRAISED BY THE WHOLE WORLD." (St. John xi, 55; xii, 11; St. Mark xiv, 3–9; St. Matthew xxvi, 6–13.)[1]

WITHOUT further delay Jesus and His followers set out on the way to Jerusalem. The caravans that had joined Him on the evening before still followed Him, and the immense crowd, escorting their Messiah-King, entered upon the difficult and dangerous roads leading from Jericho to the Holy City. In all probability it was the eighth of

[1] The anointing described by *St. Matt.* xxvi, 6, and *St. Mark* xiv, 3, shortly before the Paschal feast, is unmistakably the same as the one in *St. John* xii. It is true that the Synoptics mention only the anointing of the head, and St. John only that of the feet; but that is a detail largely compensated for by the characteristic name given to the ointment in *St. John* and *St. Mark*, μύρου νάρδου πιστικῆς. It has also been objected that the Synoptics place the anointing ten days before the Passover, while St. John says distinctly that it took place six days before. The answer is that in the Synoptics this account is given in parenthesis and retrospectively, in connection with the betrayal by Judas. The oral Gospel had brought these two events together as being logically connected, and the written Gospel maintained this connection at the expense of the chronological order. St. John puts things back where they belong, and tells us the name of her who did the anointing. She was designated by the other two Evangelists, in the same manner as the sinful woman in *St. Luke* vii, 37, as γυνή, and she was, indeed, the same woman, named Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, formerly a sinner but now the pious and faithful follower of Jesus.

Nisan,[2] the eve of the Sabbath. They had to hasten in order to arrive in time and not to infringe on the law of rest.

The pilgrims, after having crossed the bed of the Kelt, began to climb those rocky heights which, like an immense buttress, support the higher lands of Judæa and form the western limit of the valley of the Jordan. For nearly six hours they marched on through an absolutely desert country, through defiles made famous by the murders and robberies of which they had been the scene,[3] and towards evening they reached the foot of the last mountain that hid Jerusalem from the eyes of travellers.

Here Jesus and His party halted while the rest of the pilgrims hastened on to enter the Holy City before the setting of the sun.[4] The news they brought must have increased the excitement of minds. St. John[5] tells us that all in various ways were filled with thoughts of Him. The chief priests and the Pharisees watched closely for His return, to carry out their homicidal resolutions. The pilgrims already arrived were eager to behold Him. It was in the Temple that they hoped to meet Him, and they remained there steadfast, awaiting Him with some impatience. "What think you," they said to one another, "that he is not come to the festival to-day?" Great must have been their joy when they learned that He had arrived

[2] The Passover, according to the text of *Levit.*, xxiii, 5, was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the first month. But *St. John* xii, 1, expressly says that Jesus arrived at Bethany six days before the Passover, consequently on the eighth of Nisan, towards evening. This date may be modified by including in these six days that of His arrival at Bethany and that of the Passover, but this would not be taking the texts in their natural signification.

[3] *St. Luke* x, 30. The mountain side of Adumin (Khân Hadur) was notorious for the crimes committed there. It had received the name of the Red Slope, as if the blood of the plundered travellers had tinged its wild and reddish rocks.

[4] The Sabbath begins at that moment.

[5] *St. John* xi, 55–57.

at Bethany with His disciples, and that He was preparing to come to Jerusalem after He had celebrated the Sabbath.

It was at the house of Martha and Mary, in fact, that the Master had resolved once more to accept a pious and cordial hospitality. The road of the caravans ran close by the little town where dwelt this family. To pass by with His Apostles without stopping would have sorely grieved His friends. Besides it might seem imprudent to proceed on the very first day to install Himself in Jerusalem, and much more so to spend the night there. His enemies had determined to seize Him under cover of darkness, in order not to provoke an uprising. As a matter of fact, the first evening that He passed in the Holy City, on the occasion of the Paschal supper, was the fatal evening. Once more, and for six days, He took up His lodgings in Bethany, intending to return there each evening before nightfall as to a protecting citadel whither the hatred of His adversaries could not reach Him.

This saintly family had not seen Jesus since the resurrection of Lazarus. The fact reveals with what joy He must have been received. The evening was passed in sweet outpourings of piety and tenderness. They heard once more—and, it may be, they said to themselves that it was for the last time[6]—the serene and comforting words of the Master as He discoursed on the happy life in the new Kingdom. The hours were readily forgotten in listening to the incomparable conversations of the divine Guest, and never was Sabbath better sanctified than this last one spent by Jesus on earth in a spot where the religious feelings of His soul found an echo in every heart.

On Saturday, which was the day after His arrival, a

[6] Mary's action, the next day, gives us to believe, according to Jesus' words (*St. John* xii, 7) that she expected the approaching catastrophe.

banquet was prepared in His honour in the house of Simon the Leper. If, as has been suggested, this personage was the head of the family of Bethany, who had been absent for some time [7] (since he does not figure in the mourning for Lazarus where he would naturally take his place beside the two desolate sisters), the scene that follows took place in the house of Martha and Mary. Everything inclines us to believe, however, that Simon was simply a friend of Jesus, who had been inspired by gratitude to give a banquet in honour of the Master and His disciples.[8] He had invited all the believers of that hospitable town, and the family with whom Jesus lodged had not been forgotten. This feast was the protest of His friends against the threatening attitude of His enemies. Each one contributed something to heighten the Master's triumph. Lazarus, seated among the guests, was an unmistakable evidence of the superhuman power that had called him back from the grave. Martha had been unwilling to leave to any one the honour of serving her Guest, and, in yielding it for one repast, she had insisted on following Him, in order to surround Him still with her devoted care. And last, Mary was making ready to surpass them all by an unexpected exhibition of reverence and love, which turned out to be the one important event of the banquet. To prove their affection, great souls suddenly conceive sublime thoughts, that leave at an infinite distance behind them the most eager manifestations of the vulgar. Their

[7] Simon must have been previously concerned in some way in events of the Gospel history of which we know nothing. It has been not improbably supposed that Jesus had cured him of leprosy, and that in consequence he and his family had become firm and devout believers.

[8] It would have been a matter of some surprise if the Evangelist had employed the vague form ἐποίησαν . . . δεῖπνον, "they made him a supper," on the hypothesis that this supper had been given by the family of Lazarus, and even more so that the presence of Lazarus should be mentioned as a fact worthy of notice. As a matter of fact, it is clear that St. John speaks of Lazarus as a chance guest: ὁ δὲ Λάζαρος εἷς ἦν ἐκ τῶν ἀνακειμένων σὺν αὐτῷ.

inspirations astonish and even scandalise those who are incapable of comprehending them.

In the midst of the feast, the young woman [9] appeared holding in her hands an alabaster box containing the most exquisite of perfumes. It was the purest [10] and most costly nard, the remains, perhaps, of her former vanity. Custom, among the ancients,[11] demanded that the host should honour his guests by pouring on their heads, during the repast, a sweet-scented oil.[12] Even to-day the guests are sprinkled with rose-water. It was for this important part that Mary had held herself in reserve. Her hand, which on so many other occasions of old had poured the perfumes on her companions in sin, felt itself now sufficiently pure to anoint the head of the Most Holy.

With the grace natural to a woman who had been of the world worldly, and at the same time with the lofty sentiment of respect that was becoming in one converted from sin, she solemnly approached the Master. Her attitude had something of the believer who advances to adore, and also of the priest who proceeds to consecrate a king or a victim.

The vases of perfume were sold then as now, in all the bazaars of the Orient, very carefully closed and sealed.

[9] The Synoptics persistently omit her name. They simply say *a woman*, as St. Luke did in speaking of the woman of sin, vii, 37.

[10] Nard is a perfume less frequently in use nowadays than formerly. It is extracted from a plant known in botany by the name *Nardostachys Jatamansi*, which grows in India, Persia, Ceylon, and on the Himalayas. Its aromatic and bitter taste resembles that of valerian. Its odour is very pleasant. Dioscor., i, 77, Περὶ ναρδίνου μύρου, tells how this perfume was prepared with oil of nuts and a number of ingredients, nard, balsam, myrrh, etc. Cf. Pliny, xii, 25; xiv, 19; xvi, 59; Galen, *Simpl. med.*, viii, 13; Celsus, *Hierobot.*, ii, 1, *et seq.*

[11] David (*Ps.* xxii, 5), employs this image to express the intimacy of his union with Jehovah: "Thou hast prepared a table before me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil," etc. Pagan civilisation was acquainted with these same practices. (See Plato, *De Republ.*, iii; Martial, *Epigr.*, xii; Horace, *Carm.*, ii, 11, 16.)

[12] In *St. Luke* vii, 46, Jesus finds fault because this formality is omitted.

Mary had not taken the time to open hers. Besides, she means to keep back none of her offering. The graceful urn, that is to be emptied to the last drop by the purest of affections and sanctified by contact with a divine flesh, must never serve at another banquet. The holocaust of love will consume it all. She therefore violently breaks the neck of the alabaster bottle instead of opening it with precaution, and, while she contemplates with tender adoration the august head of the Messiah-King, she extends her arm as if to consecrate Him. Piously she pours out the perfume. Then suddenly she checks herself, in amazement at her daring. A thought has crossed her mind. If she is not unworthy to touch the Master's head to-day, it is because long ago she had the courage to kiss His feet. Her whole past then rises up before her, with its sublime emotions, in the inspiration of the present moment. It was in the midst of a banquet, like this one, that she was forgiven. Falling on her knees, she wishes to renew the touching scene that marked the beginning of her justification, and the memory of which remains imperishable in her heart. The vase contained a pound of the precious liquid. The first act of adoration had not exhausted it, and now she begins to anoint the feet of Jesus. What remains of the perfume flows out unchecked, just as her whole soul had surrendered ever since the great day of her forgiveness. But her eyes can find no tears. The friends of God have no further need of weeping. The consciousness of their moral purity will not allow them to be sad. Yet the faithful friend determines at this moment to outdo the deep humility of the sinner of former days. Her beautiful hair still remains to her, a memory of a guilty past; it, too, must concur in the filial homage which she has determined to display. As Jesus allows her to proceed, her fervour increases. Forgetting everybody in the Saviour's pres-

ence, she loosens her silken tresses, as if once more to brand her former weaknesses. What matters it to her if she recall her dishonour, if by so doing she may glorify the Master? With her hair she piously wipes the blessed feet over which the nard is flowing. The intimate communion thus established between her and her Saviour seems to exalt her in an ecstasy. Having nothing more to give, she is silent, she sighs and adores. Jesus will soon tell what he thinks of a faith so vivid and a love so ardent.

Meanwhile the entire house had been filled with the fragrance of the perfume. According to Pliny [13] nothing spreads a more delightful odour than nard, and, as the Evangelists tell us, that which flowed here was of the best production and free from any admixture of foreign elements.[14] Its value certainly must have been considerable. By the side of those heavenly souls that soar in the upper regions, there are unfortunately vulgar souls also that delight in the things of earth. While the former suffer themselves to be borne along by their heroic aspirations, the latter are worried with mean considerations of sordid self-interest. This is utilitarianism striving to suppress all generosity, all poetry, every ideal in life. Some of the disciples, the Synoptics say, were shocked at this extravagance, which was not only superfluous in the treatment of a guest as indifferent as Jesus was to the

[13] *Hist. Nat.*, xiii, 35, and xii, 26.

[14] The epithet πιστικός, which is found in Xenophon, *Cyropæd.*, i, 6, 10, πιστικωτέρους λόγους; in Plato's *Gorgias*, p. 455: ὁ ῥήτωρ ἐστί πιστικὸς in the sense of *persuasive*; and in Artemidorus, *Oneir.*, ii, 32; γυνὴ πιστικὴ καὶ οἰκουρός, in the sense of *faithful, worthy of confidence*, must imply that the nard was free from any adulteration. Pliny (*H. N.*, xii, 26) says: "Adulteratur et pseudonardo herba, sincerum quidem levitate deprehenditur." Tibullus also speaking of pure nard, confirms this meaning of πιστικός. The interpretation which derives πιστικός from πίνω, and translates it *liquid* has no better foundation than that which finds its etymology in the name of a country.

refinements of such exaggerated luxury, but especially regrettable as money thrown away.

St. John, giving more exact details, shows that one disciple alone took the whole responsibility of the general displeasure. This was the son of Simon, Judas Iscariot. He it was who before long was to show himself the open enemy of the Master by an act of betrayal. Having communicated his impression to the others, he made himself the spokesman of the impressions of all. "Why," he exclaimed with the audacity characteristic of his cynical nature, "was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" Thus the wicked disciple speedily reduced to its venal worth the sacrifice that Mary has just accomplished. Three hundred pence wasted is all that this earthly soul has discerned in an incomparable act of supreme love and adoration. To be sure, as if to palliate the impertinence of his criticism, he speaks of the poor who might have benefited by so great a sum. But in reality one perceives that the poor are the common treasury of which he himself is the unfaithful keeper. For his unscrupulous hand takes therefrom more in robbery than in giving.[15] When it is full, he accomplishes his fraudulent extractions with less danger and greater profit. Had he become a thief because he was treasurer, or did he seek to be treasurer because he was a thief? We

[15] This is what St. John says in verse 6. He categorically pronounces him a thief; and if, to avoid evident tautology, we give the verb ἐβάσταζεν the sense of pilfering, the explanation closely follows the accusation. This sense is frequent among the authors. See Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiv, 8; Diogenes Lærtius, iv, §9. As for the word employed by St. John, γλωσσόκομον, according to its etymology it signifies the receptacle in which flute-players kept the mouthpieces of their flutes, but which because of its shape, like a little case or casket, was easily transformed into a portable box. This is the term employed by the Septuagint, *II Paral.*, xxiv, 8, 10, 11, to designate the box for the offerings. Josephus, *Antiq.*, vi, 1, 2, gives this name to the casket in which the Philistines kept the golden mice. The Apostles used it for the offerings of friends and drew from it for their subsistence and in almsgiving.

cannot say. The peculiar aptitudes of this cold and positive nature might have determined the Apostles to propose him themselves for this employment. Jesus, as Providence does in the government of men, respected the liberty of their choice. He was not obliged to interfere in the name of His prescience, when divine justice was thus pursuing its awful designs. The worst punishment of the wicked is often the finding of no obstacle on the road where their malice leads them. God delivers from temptation him who wishes to fly it, but He does not withhold from falling him who seeks it.

We do not know what reply Mary made to the disapproval provoked by her munificence. We may believe that she was little moved by it. Hearts that mount so high no longer hear the murmurings that come from below. Besides, since Jesus Himself undertook the reply, she had only to let Him do so.

Judas' malice and the offensive though thoughtless murmurs of the other disciples had pained Him. He spoke at once to criticise the fault of all, but with that aggrieved kindness that humiliates the guilty one and often succeeds in touching his heart. If Judas needs a more severe lesson, He reserves it for him in a clear allusion; and if even now he is thinking of betraying his Master, he can understand that the latter reads his black project [16] in his soul. "Why do you trouble this woman?" He says; "for she

[16] For Judas, the Master's words seem to mean: "Friend, restrain thy hate yet a while, ere long it shall be satisfied, for I go to be immolated by them to whom thou shalt betray me. Be not pained at this last testimony of love that this woman gives me; it fits thy plans, since it prepares my burial. If thou givest thyself the right to sell me, leave to this woman the right to embalm me." Observe the very precise details in the account which St. John gives of this whole scene. It is he that points out the characteristic anointing of the feet, the name of the woman, Mary, that of Judas who, after exciting the discontent of his colleagues, impudently voices it aloud; finally the immediate connection between the protest of this Apostle and his defection which was near at hand. These are the details of an eye-witness.

hath wrought a good work upon me. For the poor you have always with you; and whenever you will, you may do them good; but Me you have not always." His tone of melancholy and of tenderness made the reproach particularly painful to friendly hearts. The true disciples must have deeply regretted their imprudent words. But Jesus had not finished His lesson. They have invoked the principle of utility against this pious woman. Alas! this anointing would not be useless, for its purpose is not to enhance the delights of the feast, but to begin the honours of a burial.

Love has enabled Mary to look with prophetic view into the future. She knows what shall happen to-morrow; and while all are looking for the triumph, she surely foresees the catastrophe. Let others think of their ambitious dreams, she remains wholly occupied with the thoughts of death and separation. Contemplating that beloved head in the midst of the joys of the banquet, she had seen the death that was going to blight it. That is why she wished to embalm it beforehand, and to protect it against the ravages of the tomb. She has looked upon the blessed feet of the heavenly Ambassador, and, thinking that the wicked are going to check them in their course, she has resolved to anoint them to give them the strength still to run, when they shall have triumphantly trampled on the snares of death and hell. Thus the embalmment extends to the entire man, and the consecration embraces the victim from head to foot. The hour of the wicked may come, the prey is ready for the sepulchre. Mary has worthily fulfilled the august part which her faith and her love inspired her to do. "What she could," Jesus continued, "she hath done; for she in pouring this ointment upon My body, hath done it for the burial. Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole

world, that also which she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her."

The glory of Mary Magdalen is that she saw into the future, whereas the disciples, blinded by their earthly illusions, saw nothing; that she showed herself piously prodigal, while the murmur of avarice accused her, and that she loudly proclaimed her love while Judas' hypocrisy basely concealed his hatred. Her glory is that of faithful friendship, of heroic repentance, of invincible faith. More than eighteen centuries have passed since the day when Jesus prophesied the future celebrity of His friend, and everywhere Magdalen is known, admired, honoured. How many souls have longed for her part in this banquet of holy charity! How many mouths have proclaimed her blessed! How many women have wished to bear her name! Poetry, the arts, eloquence have emulated one another in extolling her, and mankind, in admiration before the great heart of this converted sinner, has consecrated to her a most tender and most consoling devotion.

In the evening, probably after the close of the Sabbath,[17] many came from Jerusalem to Bethany to see not only Jesus, but also Lazarus restored to life. The Jews, coming from all parts and informed of the great events lately accomplished, must have found the deepest interest in contemplating Him Who declared Himself the Messiah, and in verifying with their own eyes, in Lazarus returned from the grave, the authentic proof of His divine mission.

This movement of legitimate curiosity, capable of giving birth to faith in many souls, threatened to leave the chiefs of the opposition almost alone at the very moment when they sought to begin the struggle. All their proj-

[17] The distance between Jerusalem and Bethany was too great to be covered on such a day without infringing on the law of Sabbatic rest.

ects might suddenly be baffled. Without support among the people, they were incapable of holding in check the influence of the Galilean caravans, thoroughly devoted to Jesus their compatriot. The strange thought then occurred to them to put Lazarus to death. In all probability they suspected him of fraud in the incident of his resurrection; otherwise their determination would have been unreasonable. For He Who had resurrected him the first time would only have to do so a second time. Resolved to see in Jesus' works only a continued series of false miracles cleverly combined to allure the people, they were eager to prove that they were right.

All this did not prevent the multitude from being most happily disposed in favour of the young Prophet or from declaring their enthusiasm in spite of the opposition of the hierarchical party. They awaited only an opportunity to hail their Messiah-King. This opportunity was not long in coming.

CHAPTER IV

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRANCE INTO JERUSALEM

THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE MULTITUDE—THE PROCESSION—ACCLAMATIONS—JESUS AND THE PHARISEES—WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM—THE VISIT TO THE TEMPLE. (St. John xii, 12–19; St. Mark xi, 1–11; St. Luke xix, 29–44; St. Matthew xxi, 1–11.)

SINCE, in accordance with the divine plan, it was through triumph that He was to proceed to death, Jesus did not hesitate to yield to the popular movement. Had He not just been consecrated King and Victim at the supper in Bethany? There was nothing for Him now but to let friends and enemies act.

The tenth of the month of Nisan was the sacramental date, in the Jewish year, on which each family reserved the Paschal lamb.[1] This mysterious separation sanctified the victim, and officially consecrated it for the coming feast. Jesus, the mystic Lamb, would find it natural to separate Himself, too, from the multitude on the day prescribed by the law. In accepting the triumph prepared for Him, He meant to surrender Himself to death willingly for the salvation of mankind. The great biblical memories were ever present before His eyes, and He meant to fulfil, to

[1] *Exodus* xii, 3.

the very last detail, all the prophetic figures that had foreshadowed Him. On this day, Josue had come up out of the Jordan and had begun the struggle with the kings of Chanaan.[2] Such an anniversary quite naturally forced itself upon the true Guide of the people of God to undertake the foundation of the Church, to confront His enemies and, though falling beneath their blows, to destroy them forever. It was probably about midday [3] when, coming forth from the house of Martha, He set out on the way to Jerusalem. This news was promptly spread abroad, and the multitude began to assemble from all directions.

On reaching Bethphage,[4] which was near enough to the city to justify the Rabbis in saying: "the bread made in Bethphage is as sacred as if it had been made in Jeru-

[2] *Jos.* iv, 19.

[3] We may conclude this from the fact that in Jerusalem He had only time to visit the Temple before resuming at nightfall the journey back to Bethany.

[4] The Synoptic tradition allows for no stop at Bethany; the first three Evangelists seem to describe Jesus as proceeding directly from Jericho to Jerusalem where He makes His triumphal entry. St. John supplies this omission and then joins once more in the account of his predecessors at the time when Jesus, between Bethany and Jerusalem, mounts upon the ass which was to give Him a certain prominence in the midst of the multitude. *St. Luke* xix, 29, and, according to the best authorities, *St. Mark* xi, 1, seem to create a topographical difficulty in placing Bethphage before Bethany. St. Luke says: ὡς ἤγγισεν εἰς Βηθφαγὴ καὶ Βηθανίαν. Now, if on their way to Jerusalem they came first to Bethphage and then to Bethany, it would appear in view of *St. John* xii, 14, that Jesus, having left Bethany, could not have found an ass at Bethphage without retracing His steps, which would not be reasonable to suppose. But, if we turn more particularly to the Greek text of *St. Mark* xi, 1, which is the true text: "When they were drawing near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage, to Bethany, at the Mount of Olives," we see that, the most important place, the end of the pilgrimage, Jerusalem, being indicated, the Evangelist retraces his steps as far as Bethany, the starting-point of the procession, passing through Bethphage, the point where the triumphal march is definitely organised. As we have no precise knowledge of the site of Bethphage (the House of Figs), we may rightly suppose that this little village was on the road of the caravans at the point where it divided towards Bethany. But, in this case, could we apply to it the series of texts in which the Talmud supposes it to be at the gates of Jerusalem?

salem," [5] the crowd increased still more. It may be that the camps of pilgrims, who found no room in the city, extended as far as there. Less attached to the inhabitants of the capital and accustomed to life in the open air, the Galileans, more particularly, may have been thus encamped. However that may be, from this moment the enthusiasm assumed great proportions. From the slopes of the Mount of Olives the crowds ran to meet Jesus, waving in their hands branches of palms cut in haste. This tree is, in the Orient, the emblem of strength and of beauty. Moses, in Leviticus,[6] recommended the people to carry branches of it on the feast of Tabernacles, as a sign of joy, and as if to prepare in advance an ovation to the future Messiah. Here, the people, believing that they beheld this Messiah with their own eyes, no longer restrained their jubilation, and saluted Him with the symbolic palms. Their chants fully explained their thought.

A Messianic psalm,[7] which they loved to repeat on religious manifestations, in the procession of Tabernacles and at the close of the Paschal feast, after the great Hallel, seemed to them suited to the impressions of the moment. The multitude chanted in chorus: "Hosanna![8] blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" For them Jesus was therefore not only a prophet, but the Messianic Messenger, the new King of the theocracy. And the Master did not silence this courageous, boisterous faith. He desired, on the contrary, to prove that it was right in declaring itself thus, by fulfilling a most significant prophecy of Zacharias [9] before the eyes

[5] Bab. Pesachim, 63, 2; Menachot, 7, 6. Bethphage is there also said to be *extra muros*, or again *in conspectu mœnium urbis*.

[6] *Levit.* xxiii, 40.

[7] *Ps.*, cxvii, 25, 26.

[8] Hosciha-nah, with *Jehovah* necessarily understood, signifies "Jehovah, save, I pray thee"; this is best translated by the French, *salut!* English, *hail!*

[9] *Zach.*, ix, 9.

of all. It had been said by this prophet, that the humble and pacific royalty of the Messiah would not be like that of earthly potentates. In the midst of His triumph He would be meek and modest. By this twofold sign Israel was to recognise its King and Saviour.[10]

Hence, at this moment, in order to distinguish Himself from the multitude that surrounded Him and to show Himself to His friends who hailed Him, Jesus determined to take the place of honour in this triumphal march to Jerusalem. It was on richly caparisoned mules that, long before, His ancestors, David and Solomon, had made their solemn entries into the Holy City; He, the true King, not of armies, but of souls, will come modestly on an ass; and His people shall see that He wishes to be for them all a prince as modest as He is gentle-natured. "Go," He said to two of His disciples, "into the village that is over against you, and immediately at your coming in thither, ye shall find an ass tied and a colt with her upon which no man yet hath sat; loose them and bring them to me. And if any man shall say to you, What are ye doing? say ye that the Lord hath need of them, and forthwith he shall let them go." In obedience to this command, the disciples went and found the two animals tied, in front of a door, at a point where two roads crossed each other.[11] At the mere saying that the Master had need of them, they were permitted to lead them away. The owners were no doubt friends of Jesus. And besides, who would have

[10] *St. John* xii, 16, remarks that the disciples themselves did not suspect that a prophecy was being fulfilled in what was then taking place. It was only later on when the Master had entered into glory that they recalled and understood the prophetic bearing of events in which they had taken part.

[11] These picturesque details are St. Mark's xi, 44. St. John does not mention these measures taken to provide a beast upon which to ride, but briefly says: *εὑρὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὀνάριον ἐκάθισεν ἐπ' αὐτό.* At the same time he seems to suppose them when, v. 16, he speaks of what the Apostles had done for Him on this occasion, *καὶ ταῦτα ἐποίησαν αὐτῷ.*

dared at that time to refuse to participate in the triumph of the Messiah-King? Before the Master Who spoke, there were no other masters, and the owner had only to resign his rights.

In the times of the Patriarchs and Judges, there was no unseemliness in riding an ass in Palestine. Horses were introduced only at a later date, in consequence of the commercial relations established with Arabia and Egypt. From that date the ass was used only by travellers of the middle class, and by the poorer classes in their work. The son of Sirach, in his lessons of wisdom,[12] shows, in fact, that in his time the ass was as little valued as in our day; and certainly Zacharias, in representing the Messiah as riding upon such an animal, did not wish to foretell a proud conqueror, but a king of another order, poor notwithstanding His might, and modest in spite of His glory.

Let us remark, however, that Jesus, while choosing the lowliest of animals to aid in His triumph, requires that no man shall have used it before Him. Jewish law,[13] like paganism, did not deem it permissible to assign to the uses of religion a beast that had already served the needs of mankind. If the ass was brought with her colt, it was no doubt because they sought thus to lead the latter more easily in the triumphal march. St. Matthew gives this insignificant detail only the better to show the fulfilment of Zacharias'[14] words.

From the mystical standpoint, St. Justin, in his dialogue with Tryphon, has ingeniously imagined that the

[12] *Ecclesiasticus* xxxiii, 25.

[13] *Numbers*, xix, 2; *Deut.*, xxi, 3; *I Kings*, vi, 7. We see what the pagans thought in Horace, *Epod.* ix, 22 "intactæ boves"; Virgil, *Georg.* iv, 540, 551, etc.

[14] The prophecy of Zacharias is quoted both by St. John and St. Matthew with a liberty that is content with following the sense, without seeking either the words or even the phraseology. St. Matthew, although the more complete, seems to insert a memory of Isaias lxii, 11.

ass was the image of the Jewish nation present at the triumph in order to embellish it, but taking no active part. The colt, in this case, is the symbol of paganism, which had not yet borne the divine yoke. It is through the synagogue that it receives spiritual life; but the son shall supplant the mother, and the latter, though present at the inauguration of the Messianic reign, shall have a part that is almost nil. Jesus chooses to be borne in triumph and proclaimed king upon the shoulders of the pagan world.

The disciples covered the young ass with their best garments by way of housings, and the Master took His seat upon [15] it. Arrived on the summit of the Mount of Olives, they were able all together to salute the Holy City and its great memories. The solemn procession then took a more immediate object, and disclosed a better drawn plan. The daughter of Sion had now only to go out to behold her King coming to her, "the just and Saviour and poor." On His lowly beast, like the judges of old times,[16] He was bringing to the nations words of peace. St. John says, in fact, that the people, seeing Him who had raised Lazarus from the dead thus escorted in triumph, came out from Jerusalem to meet Him.[17]

Nothing could be more touching than this manifesta-

[15] Here is another difficulty arising from St. Matthew's text. It is remarkable that it is of the same kind as those already mentioned with reference to the demoniacs of Gergesa and the blind men of Jericho. It is the plural, taking the place of the singular. The text ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν would seem to say that Jesus mounted both animals, which would have been somewhat extraordinary. It is true, we can avoid this difficulty by making αὐτῶν refer to ἱματιῶν, and it was on the garments, in fact, that Jesus sat. But the passage as a whole excludes this explanation. An error on the part of copyists or translator is probable here also. It may have been caused by a false interpretation of *Zach.* ix. *St. Mark* xi, 3, 4, 7, 9, and *St. Luke* xix, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, while maintaining an exact parallel with the first Synoptic, persist in mentioning only the young ass.

[16] *Judges*, x, 4; xii, 14; v, 10.

[17] *St. John* xii, 18, distinguishes this crowd coming from the city from that which followed Jesus: καὶ ὑπήντησεν αὐτῷ ὁ ὄχλος.

tion, which was at the same time simple and grandiose. In every group they told each other of the miraculous works of Jesus, and more particularly of the story of Lazarus, dead and restored to life. Many had been witnesses of this latest prodigy, and Martha's brother, who, no doubt, was in the crowd, afforded their words the most striking confirmation. The enthusiasm grew at each step. The newcomers, too, cut branches from the trees, from the myrtle and olive-trees especially, of which there were many on the way, and, joining the procession, they cried out again and again: "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh! Peace in heaven and glory on high! Hosanna in the highest!"[18] At the same time they strewed with verdure the way where Jesus was to pass; some even spread their garments on the road. Thus long ago had Jehu been honoured at the moment when he was proclaimed king.[19] Thus had the people strewn flowers beneath the feet of Alexander the Great to calm his wrath and to spare the city its final woes.[20] But in those days fear had bowed the head of the people before terrible monarchs, whereas now love alone brought souls in submission before the feet of the Saviour.

In the immense crowd there were, however, some very politic, timid, and even jealous men, and St. Luke, qualifying them as Pharisees, gives us reason to think that they were enemies of Jesus. This significant demonstration frightened them. They imagined that they already saw the Roman soldiers brandishing their spears on the top of the fortress Antonia in suppressing it, and they sought

[18] This was another series of acclamations. They formed a part both of the Hallel and of the prayer addressed to God to hasten the coming of the Messiah.

[19] *IV Kings* ix, 13.

[20] *Antiq.*, xi, 8, 5.

to remind Jesus of that wise prudence which till then had characterised His apostolate. It may be that under this apparently charitable request they concealed only a most hypocritical spite. After a vain endeavour to impose silence on the Apostles they betook themselves directly to Jesus, Who seemed to them to be responsible for that which He tolerated. "Master," they said to Him, "rebuke thy disciples." And Jesus simply replied with prophetic majesty: "I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out." For homage must be done to the true King of Israel. The day when fear shall close the mouths of the disciples, the rocks of Golgotha shall be rent, proclaiming in this manner the divinity of the Crucified, and when the Apostles, driven from Jerusalem by persecution, shall no longer be able to make the defence of their Master heard, the stones of the Temple and of the entire city, falling beneath the blows of the Romans, shall again attest the divine mission and assert the rights of the unacknowledged Messiah.

The cries of enthusiasm continuing, the Pharisees said to one another angrily: "Do you see that we prevail nothing? Behold the whole world is gone after Him." The victory of the young Prophet seemed indeed complete. The hierarchical party stood alone and without followers. This was, no doubt, in their eyes, a proof that the determination of the Sanhedrim had been wisely taken, and that there was need, instead of half-way measures, of having recourse to extreme methods.

These recriminations, signs of evil disposition, must have given Jesus a presentiment of the hostile reception that awaited Him in Jerusalem. Hence as He approached nearer and nearer to the city, whose splendid buildings rose before Him in all their magnificence, His eyes rested upon it with as much sadness as love. He read

in the future the most dreadful misfortunes, and suddenly, with the tears flowing from His eyes, He exclaimed, with a sigh:[21] "If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes." What a touching picture is this: of the triumphant One forgetting His triumph to weep for the misfortune of His enemies! Why will Jerusalem still remain faithless to her Messiah-King? Would she but open her eyes even at the last moment, and imitate the faith of these Galileans who are escorting Him, how different her future would be! Glory and felicity would return with the Saviour's reign; a whole past of crimes would be forgotten and atoned for by this generous conversion. But it shall not be so. Jerusalem shall persist more than ever in seeing neither the good things she loses nor the woes she is preparing for herself. "For," Jesus adds in accents of deepest grief—for it is His country's ruin that He prophesies —"the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee and shall compass thee round and shall straiten thee on every side; and beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation." Thus He foresaw and foretold the horrors of the future.[22] The ruins, the dead and the dying shall thus, in spite of themselves, give testimony to the rejected Messiah. They who would have none of God's mercy, shall be subjected to His justice. The punishment shall be so terrible, that it shall forever appal all future generations.

When the procession reached the streets of the city, it

[21] The text has: ἔκλαυσεν, not ἐδακρύσεν. There is a marvellous accuracy in the shades of meaning of this account which St. Luke alone gives, xix, 41.

[22] *B. J.*, Book V, chap. xviii, *et seq.*

may be that these mournful prophecies had already moderated the enthusiasm of the multitude. We read, however, in St. Matthew, that the whole city was moved by the event. The people crowded in the Lord's way, and every one was asking: "Who is this?" And the multitude replied: "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee!"

The Master desired to go at once to the Temple. As He entered there, amid general excitement and shouts of joy, conducted in triumph by His own, Jesus perceived more closely the ill-concealed wrath of His enemies. However, no one dared, before so impressive a demonstration, to utter a discordant cry. As the true Messianic King and supreme chief of the people and of religion, He inspected everything in the holy place. It may be that, at that late hour, the court of the Gentiles was not occupied by the merchants. At any rate, He did not wish to disturb so beautiful a feast-day by any act of severity. The lesson was reserved for the day following.

As night was approaching,[23] He returned to Bethany with the twelve Apostles, leaving the city in a state of liveliest emotion, and His enemies profoundly irritated by His noble triumph.

[23] The triumphal entry had taken the greater part of the afternoon, and St. Mark xi, 11, says that it was late: *ὀψίας ἤδη οὔσης τῆς ὥρας*. Bethany is given by this Evangelist as the place to which Jesus retired. St. Matthew xxi, 17, says the same for the next day.

CHAPTER V

MONDAY: THE REIGN OF JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

THE SADNESS OF JESUS—THE WITHERED FIG-TREE—THE SELLERS IN THE TEMPLE—"BY WHAT AUTHORITY"—MIRACLES OF HEALING—ACCLAMATION OF THE YOUNG LEVITES—THE PHARISEES. (St. Mark xi, 12-19; St. Matthew xxi, 12-19; St. Luke xix, 45-48.)

THE procession that had accompanied Jesus in His triumph was composed mostly of Galileans and of strangers who had come as pilgrims to the Paschal feasts. It could not be concealed that the immense majority of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, if they had not held aloof, had at most shown only a vain curiosity. These frivolous people were pleased to press more tightly than ever over their eyes the fatal bandage that had blinded them so long. For peoples, as well as for individuals, to resist grace is ordinarily to open the heart to evil influences. Here not to be openly with Jesus was to take sides against Him. Let the Sanhedrim only attempt a daring stroke, and it will transform into fierce enemies these hesitating men who have witnessed this humble triumph, as one beholds a new spectacle, without any emotion in the depth of the soul. They were not well-disposed on seeing Him blessed and acclaimed by all; their wickedness shall be manifested when He is set before them, accused and accursed.

It was with the burden of these thoughts heavy upon Him, that the Master had returned to Bethany. They had filled His soul throughout the night. In the morning,[1] when He set out once more for Jerusalem, He was sad. The clear sight of the obstinate incredulity of Israel and of the final reprobation which was to be its consequence overwhelmed His heart. He felt the need of unbosoming Himself to His disciples.

A fig-tree, planted by the road-side and distinguished by its surprising precocity, attracted His attention. Jesus saw in it an emblem of the people of God. On another occasion and in the form of a parable, He had represented Israel as a fig-tree planted by Jehovah in the midst of the nations and grieving its master by its sterility.[2] The pretentious tree had no fruit. The Master knew this in advance. The luxurious vegetation of its foliage had absorbed everything. However, one had a right to expect of it more than vain adornment. Israel, too, with its hypocritical exhibitions of piety and of justice, had only made too evident its inability to produce anything for God its Master. In vain had the time of probation been prolonged at the vine-dresser's request. The respite was ending, and naught had been gained but more and more hateful results. It was the hour of justice; it was to be a terrible hour. To make it the better understood Jesus, like the ancient prophets, had recourse to a symbolical act, the meaning of which becoming, so to

[1] *St. Mark* xi, 12, assigns the incidents we are about to mention to the next day after the triumphal entry, τῇ ἐπαύριον. If we had only the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, we might suppose that the purification of the Temple had taken place on the same day as our Lord's triumphal entry. For *St. Luke* xix, 45, continues the account of the Messiah's ovation, in these terms: καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν ἤρξατο ἐκβάλλειν, and likewise *St. Matthew* xxi, 12. From which we see, once again, that we must not look to the Synoptics for an accuracy which their traditional origin would by no means admit.

[2] *St. Luke* xiii, 6.

speak, more tangible, would produce a lively impression upon the Apostles' minds, and engrave there for ever the terrible lesson contained in the example.

At this moment, the Evangelists say, He was hungry. There can be a question here only of a hunger that was altogether spiritual and supernatural. The Master came from the house of His friends, and in less than half an hour he would arrive in Jerusalem. The need of eating which He felt and which He wished to satisfy was therefore only the vehement desire of finding in Israel the Lord's mystical fig-tree, the fruit whose blossoming and ripening He had so long awaited. He approached the tree with His disciples, and, after a careful search, He found only leaves upon it. True, it was hardly the season when the figs [3] should blossom. But in that case how was it that this tree had already pushed forth leaves? The fruit of the fig-tree comes before or at least together with its foliage; otherwise not at all. This is a striking image of the fatuity of Israel calling itself, among the nations, the exceptional people, God's servant and friend, because it has the Temple and the law, but in reality concealing beneath the lying appearances of false justice the most deceptive barrenness. "May no man," said the Master, "hereafter eat fruit of thee any more for ever." God's curse is a devouring fire. It consumed at once the life of the tree down to its very roots, and, when they passed there on the next day, the disciples found that the fig-tree was completely dead.[4] Thus shall Judaism perish

[3] The first fig of the season, or *boccore*, is ripe in June; the *kermus* figs are ripe in August; and finally, the winter fig larger than the others, more oval in shape and of a violet colour, remains on the tree even when the leaves have fallen. In any case none are seen in April. They cannot survive the first frost. The first class is meant here, which begins to grow in March.

[4] The apparent divergency between St. Matthew, who says of the tree: "And *immediately* the fig-tree withered away," and St. Mark, who seems to

unfruitful and proud. This the disciples must understand.[5]

Without further delay Jesus reached Jerusalem and made His appearance in the Temple. His intention was to assert His authority, and to reign there as Master during the few hours He had to live. At this courageous vindicating of Messianic rights, His enemies, surprised, terrified, thought only of giving way to Him. They seemed for the moment even to have laid aside their hate and their pretentions. The wicked frequently withdraw into the shadow in order the better to prepare new plans of attack.

Nothing is more difficult to uproot than abuses, when they have become the normal state in the religious life of a people. We have seen Jesus, at the outset of His public life, mercilessly drive the sellers from the Temple. Nothing daunted, they had again installed themselves there in the following year, and, in spite of the severe lesson it had received, the hierarchical authority tolerated these encroachments. It may have been to its interest to do so. The name borne by a section occupied by these merchants and money-changers, *Hanouïots*, the stalls of Hanna, would warrant the belief that it was a commercial enterprise belonging to the aged High-Priest who had been dispossessed.[6] On the other hand, the exclusivism of the Pharisees was probably no stranger to this extraordinary toleration. For it may have been their intention to alienate

put off its final death until the *next day*, is explained in this sense that death, *instantaneous within*, was evident externally only after some hours.

[5] Thus, by this incident as by many others in the Gospel history, certain difficulties presented as unanswerable are made to vanish. To pretend that, according to the Evangelists, Jesus really desired to eat figs fresh from the tree at the Passover, would be admitting that they ascribed to Him a most extravagant whim.

[6] See Lightfoot and Edersheim, *Life of Jesus*, V. I. B. iii, c. v; Derebourg *Hist. et Geog. de la Palestine*, p. 467.

more and more from the Temple and from Jehovah all that was not Jewish. This place reserved for the nations, in the house of the true God, appeared to them too large, perhaps, and they readily gave up the greater part of it to the merchants, to the money-changers, or even to the animals used in the sacrifice.

It was more particularly at the feast of the Passover that this scandal was prominent, and this traffic shamelessly displayed in the sacred enclosure. It was just at that time, too, that the Gentiles came in greater numbers to pay their homage to the God of Israel. They found their precincts scandalously invaded. It was impossible for them to adore or to pray amid such confusion.[7] This sight rent Jesus' heart. The tumult had increased, no doubt, since the evening before, the sellers, as well as the buyers, becoming more and more numerous as the solemnity drew near.

Suddenly, the Master gives rein to His indignation. Not armed this time with a scourge of cords, He commands with a look, a gesture, a word, and every one trembles. His superhuman majesty advancing upon them, drives the sellers and buyers pell-mell before it. The tables of the money-changers, the seats and benches of the dove-merchants He overturns, and, thus, no one daring to resist Him, for the second time He restores order in His Father's house, which had been so disgracefully troubled. His severity goes so far as to forbid even the carrying of a vessel through the Temple. This was an effective means of closing the door against all abuses.

[7] Jesus, Who had been present at no other Paschal solemnity since the beginning of His public life, had had no other opportunity to protest against this disgrace. On the feast of Tabernacles or of the Dedication, the religious movement was more limited and the sacrifices fewer. There was not that great and tumultuous crowd that gave to the business of the money-changers and of the dealers in animals an exceptional importance during the second week of Nisan.

Then, to justify this act of authority, He turned and said to the people who surrounded Him: "Is it not written: My house shall be called the house of prayer to all nations; but you have made it a den of thieves?" Both texts, which Jesus unites in one, were borrowed from the prophets. The first, from Isaias,[8] asserted God's right; the second, from Jeremias,[9] stigmatised man's abuse. Both were an awful condemnation of the priests who, through connivance or weakness, tolerated such a profanation.[10] If their object was to wall up the Law and grace of God more and more effectually in the Temple of God, and to repel forever every one who was not a child of Israel, they were most certain to succeed. For, these deputies whom the nations sent each year to the Paschal solemnities, would tell throughout the world that, notwithstanding the divine invitation, there was no longer room for them in the Temple in Jerusalem; that foul animals had supplanted man there, that their bellowings resounded in the enclosure where the nations had no longer the right to offer to Jehovah their homage and their prayers, and that instead of believers, thieves had taken their seats. This was a great crime, the entire responsibility for which fell upon the priesthood, the official guardian of the Temple. Human malice, interfering between God and the honest souls among the nations, thus prevented Him from show-

[8] *Isaias*, lvi, 7.
[9] *Jerem.* vii, 11.
[10] There is undoubtedly a great resemblance between this incident related in the Synoptics, and that found in *St. John* ii, 13, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. But the abuse, being repeated in the same manner, could not but provoke the same rebuke. However, among the several details which distinguish these two incidents one from the other, it will be noticed that there is a difference both in the conclusions and in the meaning of the words of Jesus in each of the two purifications of the Temple. In the first the Master attacks the scandal that Israel permits. In the second He refers to the right of the pagans to a place in the Temple. In the beginning of His ministry He sought to restore the theocracy, now He wishes to save the Gentiles.

ing His love to all creatures, and withheld them from coming to acknowledge and adore the Creator.

On hearing these grave teachings, the people, filled with admiration, took pleasure in recounting the miraculous works of the young Doctor. At the same time, the blind, the infirm, who stood at the gates of the Temple begging,[11] came to Him, besought a cure, and obtained it. Thus Jesus, sanctioned, as God, the great lesson He had just given to the priests, the careless guardians of the dignity of the Temple.

All at once, the general enthusiasm could no longer be restrained, and from the midst of the crowd voices cried out: "Hosanna to the Son of David!" It was the young Levites, employed in the divine service, saluting the Wonder-worker, the Law-giver, the Theocratic King Who now appeared in His Father's house. Even these children, to whom He had so often manifested His tender love, were determined to pay Him homage. This renewed, with a daring even more significant, the ovation of the day before; for this time Jesus was proclaimed Messiah in the Temple itself and before the eyes of the religious authorities. The representatives of the latter were moved to profound indignation; but, as on so many other occasions, in the presence of the immense popular favour that welcomed the young Prophet, they had perforce to look on in silence. Against so great a multitude they were powerless. It were better to await a propitious moment in order cleverly to turn the multitude against Him Whom to-day it hailed with such ardour, and to associate it with themselves in the greatest of iniquities. Drawing near to Jesus, the chief priests merely said to Him: "Hearest thou what these say?" They sought, by craftily asking for His

[11] *Acts* iii, 2.

opinion concerning this significant demonstration, to place on Him its entire responsibility. "Yea," Jesus responded without emotion. Then, in order to justify that which was to them a scandal, He added: "Have you never read: Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise."[12] Thus He extolled, by the very authority of the Holy Books, the dignity of His young admirers, which the Scribes seemed to contest. Whatever they in their malice may think of it, the children are, nevertheless, in the judgment of the Psalmist, the most ingenuous, the most disinterested, and the most pure organs of truth.

For the remainder of the day Jesus continued to instruct the people, who, according to St. Luke's words, hung upon His lips. When evening came, He took the road over the Mount of Olives, and returned to Bethany to pass the night.

[12] *Psalm* viii, 3.

CHAPTER VI

TUESDAY: THE REPLY TO THE SANHEDRIM—PARABLES

Peter Before the Withered Fig-Tree—In the Temple—The Question of the Sanhedrim—The Counter-Question of Jesus—Parable of the Two Sons—The Husbandmen—The Corner-Stone—The Marriage Feast—The Wedding Garment. (St. Mark xi, 20; xii, 12; St. Matthew xxi, 20; xxii, 14; St. Luke xx, 1–19.)

Jesus was not unaware that His enemies, having determined to unite their efforts in trying Him with captious questions, would look for Him without fail on the morrow. This was Tuesday. He may have set out early in the day, that He might leave them no time to turn against Him the people who are always so changeable in their impressions.

On the way the disciples noticed the fig-tree that had been cursed the day before.[1] It was withered to its roots. "How is it presently withered away!" they murmured to each other. Peter, in order to evoke an explanation of this prodigy, the utility of which he did not see, said: "Rabbi, behold the fig-tree, which thou didst curse, is withered away." And Jesus continuing the thought which He had desired to make transparent beneath this symbolical fact,

[1] If they did not notice it Monday evening, it was either because it was dark, or because they had taken another road.

merely replied what He had already said on other occasions with regard to the omnipotence of true believers. "Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not, not only this of the fig-tree shall you do, but also if you shall say to this mountain: Take up and cast thyself into the sea, it shall be done." The Apostles shall have the power of life and death not only over a tree, but over a people. At their command, infidel Judaism, stubborn, cruel, shall wither in its hateful jealousy, and the Mount of Moriah, which stands before their eyes, shall disappear with its priesthood and its temple, to be submerged in the vast sea of the nations converted. Already too long has she closed to the world the road that leads to God. With a word, with a prayer, the Apostles must suppress this obstacle. Such is the future.

Arrived in the Temple, Jesus began to stroll [2] up and down like a man ready for the struggle. In the meantime He instructed those who were grouped around Him. The hour was early and, perhaps, as yet there were few in the holy place.

However, His enemies were not long in coming. Their whole thought from the day before had been to select a deputation that should speak in the name of all. This deputation now stepped forward. Composed of high-priests, scribes and elders of the people, in a word, of the threefold element that constituted the Sanhedrim, it assumed in the eyes of all an official character. "By what authority," these emissaries said to Him, "dost thou these things? And who hath given thee this authority that thou shouldst do these things?" This is not the first time that we see the hierarchical party challenge Jesus on this burning question in answer to which by characterising His

[2] *St. Mark* xi, 27, says: *ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ περιπατοῦντος αὐτοῦ.*

mission, He might furnish a pretext for a juridical action. His triumph of the previous day would undoubtedly move Him to proclaim more loudly than ever that which He thought of Himself. Every one awaited His reply with impatience. How would He define the intimate nature of His authority? Whence did He derive it? Both parts of the question were closely bound one to the other. Were His credentials human or divine?

Instead of replying categorically, Jesus essayed to make his enemies answer for Him. To pose a question in response to another question was much in vogue among the dialecticians of the Synagogue. But in order to be topical, this counter-question should, by forcing a reply, establish the ignorance or the bad faith of those who had provoked it. In this instance, Jesus found a twofold advantage in employing this process: on the one hand He avoided making the personal declaration so maliciously sought, and on the other He seemed to pay true homage to the Sanhedrim, the competent and official judge in all theological difficulties. "I," He said to them, "will also ask you one word, and answer you Me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things." A single question! It was not much, but it sufficed to cause them embarrassment, for it was pointedly chosen. "The baptism of John was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me." At once they appeared sorely perplexed. They consulted each other, saying: "If we say from heaven, He will say: Why then did you not believe him?" His words introducing the Messiah to His people had been clear, and the Precursor had found himself deserted by the hierarchical party at the very time when he had declared what he thought of Jesus. "But, if we say: Of men, the whole people will stone us," added the more prudent, "for they are persuaded that John was a prophet." For in the eyes of the

multitude John the Baptist had been a messenger from heaven, and his tragic death had but added another halo to his great and beautiful figure. The scandal would, therefore, have been considerable. The Sanhedrists preferred to deny their competence. They said: "We know not." But, by confessing themselves incapable of settling a religious question as elementary as it was important, did they not abdicate the dogmatic authority of which they appeared so jealous? The proud mountain was, then, entering upon visible dissolution; the tree was withering of itself. Jesus to accentuate their humiliation appeared to accept purely and simply this hypocritical avowal of their ignorance, and added: "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Turning then to the people,[3] He gave them a series of parables which, in affirming the divinity of His mission, should put in a clear light the criminal intentions of His adversaries.

"But what think you?" He exclaimed: "A certain man had two sons,[4] and coming to the first, he said: Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. And he answering said: I will not. But afterwards moved with repentance, he went. And coming to the other, he said in like manner. And he answering, said: I go, Sir, and he went not. Which of the two did the father's will?" Without hesitation the people said: "The first." As a matter of fact, his impertinence, which ended after all in real obedience, availed more than the hypocritical politeness of the latter, which disguised his detestable insubordination.

[3] This may be inferred from *St. Luke* xx, 9: Ἤρξατο δὲ πρὸς τον λαόν λέγειν.

[4] This similitude with which Jesus assumes the offensive is found only in *St. Matt.* xxi, 28–32. According to the context v. 31 and 32, it should be applied not to the Jews and the Gentiles, but to the Pharisees and to public sinners.

In these two sons it was easy to recognise the two classes of men whom God had called to redemption: public sinners and Pharisees. To the call of heaven the former at first replied: "No, we will not." But, after reflection, they judged obedience to be the better part to choose. From that moment, silencing their passions, they succeeded in conforming their life to the law of the Gospel. The others seemed at first to bow in reverence before the divine authority. With feigned submission, they called Master the God Who spoke to them as Father. But, after parading their obedience as being equal to any trial, they took care to follow only their own caprices and their own proud illusions. "Therefore," Jesus adds, looking at His adversaries who are listening: "Amen, I say to you, that the publicans and the harlots shall go into the Kingdom of God before you."[5] What could be more legitimate? When God, summoning John the Baptist from the desert, had hardly begun to give them a sign, these correct men of Judaism replied as a whole: "Master, behold us here." And, indeed, they went and had themselves baptised. But although they began by acclaiming the Precursor, they ended by accusing him, hating him, and destroying him. The public sinners did just the contrary. They were rebellious at first and afterwards faithful. That is why they are set forth as models for these proud men who despise them. "For John came to you in the way of justice, and you did not believe him. But the publicans and harlots believed him; but you seeing it, did not even afterwards repent, that you might believe him." Such is the malice of the rebellious with their fulsome politeness, and the merit of the impolite filled with obedience. Impiety is the more odious the more hypocritical it is.

[5] The expression *προάγουσιν ὑμᾶς*, is rather ironical. The publicans and the harlots are the guides, the directors of the Pharisees into the Kingdom of God.

That of the Pharisees will, moreover, go to the utmost limits. They are capable not only of rejecting the messengers of heaven, but of causing even their destruction. They betrayed John the Baptist; they will slay the Son of God. A second parable will explain this more clearly. It is again addressed to the people. "There was a man, a householder," said Jesus, "who planted a vineyard, and made a hedge around about it, and dug in it a press, and built a tower,[6] and let it out to husbandmen; and went into a strange country; and he was abroad for a long time." The vineyard planted by God the Father of mankind, is the Jewish people, whom the law, like a beneficent hedge, protects, in truth, against the invasions of paganism and idolatry. An indefectible teaching ministry, perpetuated from age to age by the prophets or by generations of pious men, had been assured it as a mystic press whence should flow the wine of truth. The Temple was the tower wherein the watchful sentinels who were to guard its prosperity, found shelter.

All being thus wisely organised, God had given the care of His vineyard to the priests, the scribes, the elders, in a word, to the theocratic authorities legally constituted. It was their duty to make the land fructify. If the Master seems to withdraw for a time, and no longer manifests an immediate interest in the welfare of His people, this can be only to test the intelligence, the devotion and the honesty of His labourers. "And at the season, he sent to the husbandmen a servant to receive of the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. Who having laid hands on him, beat him and sent him away empty. And again he

[6] The figure used in this parable is applied in *Isaias* v, 1, *et seq.*, to Israel. In journeying through Palestine the author has seen many ancient presses in the vineyards, especially on the way from Ramat-el-Khalil to Hebron. Cf. *Voyage aux Pays Biblique*, Vol II, p. 34. The watch-towers are also quite numerous.

sent another servant. But they beat him also, and treating him reproachfully, sent him away empty. And again he sent the third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out, and him they killed. And thus they did to many others." [7] Thus, in striking figures Jesus retraced, as in letters of blood the long-continued faithlessness of a perverse people. The prophets had come, and in turn they had been persecuted, dishonoured, mutilated, stoned, killed.[8] Such were the revenues that Israel had paid to Jehovah. Elias, Jeremias, Isaias, Zacharias, the son of Joiada, could attest it.

"Therefore having yet one son most dear to him, then the lord of the vineyard said: What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. It may be when they see him, they will reverence him." The parable here touched upon the very quick of the situation. Friends and enemies became

[7] We notice differences, of little importance doubtless, but numerous, between the statements of each Synoptic in regard to these messengers. Matthew has only two sendings of several servants at the same time, who are struck, stoned, killed. Mark has only one servant for the first two sendings, and several for a third. The bad treatment consists in striking, wounding the head, and killing. Luke has three sendings of a single servant who is struck, dishonored, and covered with wounds. Assuredly these variations, which are explained by the oral Gospel from which our written Gospels are taken, have no dogmatic importance, but here, as in many other passages, they seem to render untenable those theories which exclude from our sacred books every inaccuracy no matter how slight, as if the inspiration of the sacred writers had the prerogative of extending infallibility into the most insignificant details. Undoubtedly on certain points in the present parable the agreement is not perfect among the Synoptics, nor can it be made so, whatever skill in harmonizing one may employ. If Jesus said (according to *St. Matt.* xxi. 33 et seq.), that the King sent several servants on two occasions, He did not say (according to *St. Luke* xx, 10 et seq.), that he sent only one on three occasions, nor (according to *St. Mark* xii, 2 et seq.), that he sent one on two occasions and, another time, several. It must be admitted then, that, while all three are equally inspired, at least two of our Synoptics do not reproduce the exact words of the Master. This phenomenon is repeated, moreover, in other passages, doubtless of no great importance, but sufficiently numerous. It is with such passages, it seems to us, that theologians in investigating the true conditions of inspiration, ought to occupy themselves, before putting forth doctrines which the texts seem finally to render untenable.

[8] *Hebr.* xi, recounts their cruel experiences.

eager to learn the denouément. Even the most dull could divine that, in Jesus' thought, he who was sent at the latest hour, after whom there can be no other, the well-beloved Son of the Father, was indeed He from Whom they had just demanded an account of His mission. And so categorically and with courage, when His adversaries were no longer expecting it, He proclaimed His rights as the Only Son of God, one with His Father by a filiation not merely adoptive, but essential, according to which He is God like the Father from Whom He proceeds.

Let them know this then, and let them be confounded; the Father has sent forth His Son from His bosom, so to speak, and has sent Him to His people whom He desired to save. In His prescience, He was not ignorant of the reception reserved for Him; but He must needs fulfil the promises made to the patriarchs and have pity on pious souls who awaited their fulfilment. As for the rest, this hardness of the Jewish people and their final reprobation shall not prevent either the diffusion of truth in the world or the redemption of the human race. By putting the well-beloved Son to death, the Jews shall make sure the salvation of the elect. "The husbandmen," continued Jesus, "seeing the son, said among themselves:[9] This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance. And taking him, they cast him forth out of the vineyard and killed him." Such is the secret of the profound hatred which the hierarchical faction and the Pharisees have vowed against Jesus. That they may not lose their influence over the people, they are determined to do everything in their power. The entire nation is in their hands, they will not let it escape. If Jesus were

[9] The word διελογίζοντο in *St. Luke* xx, 14, is a striking allusion to the recent conferences of the leaders of Israel for the purpose of doing away with Jesus. Cf. *St. Mark* xi, 18, and especially *St. Luke* xix, 47, 48.

allowed to continue His work, their fall was certain; cost what it may the inheritance must be theirs. This their selfishness dictates to them. The Messiah, then, shall be put down by violence. These wicked men have already cast Him out of His own vineyard, by launching against Him a kind of excommunication.[10] They are making ready to pursue Him even more cruelly, when they shall drag Him out of the Holy City to kill Him on Calvary. In the composure with which the Master speaks of His approaching end there is something profoundly tragic. The enemies whom He unmasks say nothing; they tremble at seeing the storm burst still more violently above their heads.

"When, therefore," adds Jesus, "the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen?" The people reply: "He will bring those evil men to an evil end, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, that shall render him the fruit in due season." This was the verdict of human integrity. A protest, however, was heard in the multitude: "God forbid!" exclaimed some, as if to say that the chief priests were not capable of committing such a crime, or that, in any case, Jesus' friends would not permit it to be done. The Master cast a severe glance at the group from which this denial came: "Have you not read this Scripture," He said; "what is this then that is written: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes." The Saviour rightly understood this passage of the Psalm[11] as concerning the Messiah; for although it

[10] *St. John* ix, 22.

[11] *Ps.* cxvii, 22, according to the Septuagint. This passage refers to faithful Israel becoming, after the Captivity, the element of salvation for the people of God; but Israel itself was only a figure of the true Saviour Who was to come later on. All the Rabbis applied this text to the ideal leader

speaks here of David, it cannot be denied that it refers to Him of Whom the great king was a figure. In reality, the true stone scornfully rejected at first, and afterwards taken up again to play the principal part in the construction of this edifice, is the Messiah in His person and in His work. Judaism may reject Christ and the Church, but Christ and the Church shall be none the less the corner-stone of future society.

"And whosoever," the Master adds, evoking a twofold biblical memory in support of His word, "shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." Isaias [12] had compared the Messiah to a rock against which the incredulous would hurl themselves to their own destruction. Such, in truth, is the final result of man's struggles against Jesus Christ. In his folly, he exhausts himself in his endeavours to destroy the pyramid, and after all his efforts he sees that he has destroyed only his own strength. He has wasted himself in the struggle, and he dies in despair. The day shall come when, according to another saying of Daniel,[13] the stone shall take the offensive. Loosening itself from the mountain, it shall fall on the enemies of God, and shall so crush them that they may be passed through the sieve of eternal wrath. "Therefore," concludes Jesus, "I say to you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof." It was a solemn, awful sentence. In two words it determined the fall of the Mosaic priesthood and the coming of the nations into the divine inheritance.

As if it were necessary to make this substitution of the

of the theocracy (Cf. Schoettgen, *Hor. Hebr.* on this passage), and Jesus was right in applying it to Himself.

[12] *Is.* viii, 14.

[13] *Dan.* ii, 44.

pagan nations for the Jewish people better understood, Jesus proceeds to give a second parable. He had addressed it to the Pharisees before;[14] but He adds to it on this occasion certain special and significant features.

"The Kingdom of God," He says, "is likened to a King, who made a marriage for his son." This marriage is the solemn union of the Word of God with mankind. The Father invites the Jewish people the first to participate. They obstinately refuse. "The King sent his servants to call them that were invited to the marriage; and they would not come." These emissaries are the Apostles and the disciples, who have proclaimed the coming of the Messiah in the country and in the cities. Scarcely any heed was paid to their invitation. But the divine goodness is not discouraged at the first refusal of the human heart. After the sending of the twelve and of the seventy, comes that of the martyrs. It is to be hoped that by their mildness, by their heroic courage before tyrants, they at least may make themselves heard. "Again he sent other servants saying: Tell them that were invited: Behold I have prepared my dinner; my beeves and fatlings are killed and all things are ready; come ye to the marriage." At the time of this second invitation, everything shall indeed be ready. The great victim, Jesus, shall have been immolated, and placed at the disposal of every one. Salvation shall hang on the tree of the Cross, and the faithful shall have only to seize upon it. Strange to say, this wretched Jewish people shall scorn it. "But they neglected, and went their ways, one to his farm, and

[14] *St. Luke* xiv, 15; this was explained in its own place. Then it was not a king, but an ordinary individual who gave a supper and not a marriage feast. He sent only one message, not two. Those invited gave various excuses, but did not maltreat the messenger who reminded them of the invitation. Finally, they were not punished as those in this parable shall be, and, in reality, the conclusion was different.

another to his trade." Mankind follows these two voices of pleasure and of self-interest, in preference to all others. Sometimes, too, irritated at hearing itself ever recalled to its duty, it listens to that of hate, and, as if to free itself from all remorse, it kills the preachers. "And the rest laid hands on his servants, and, having treated them contumeliously, put them to death." The Jews shall be the first to cause the blood of martyrs to flow. Woe unto them! the vengeance of heaven shall follow close upon their crime. "But when the king had heard of it, he was angry, and sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city." God at all times has armies which while seeming to serve the caprices of certain princes, in reality execute the decrees of His justice. Thus the Romans shall come to destroy the persecutors, as, later on, the barbarians shall come down from the plateaus of upper Asia to destroy the Romans. Jerusalem was burnt and of those who were the first invited to the Gospel there remained naught but a woful memory.

Nevertheless God's gifts do not perish for the want of some one to accept them. "Then the King saith to his servants: The marriage indeed is ready, but they that were invited are not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as you shall find call to the marriage." On all the highways of the world souls must be gathered together that they may be led to the banquet of the Gospel. "And his servants going forth into the ways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good; and the marriage was filled with guests." Such is the history of the preaching of the Apostles after Pentecost. "Because you reject it" (the Word of God), St. Paul shall say to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, "and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold we turn

to the gentiles." [15] Regardless of person, good and bad, rich and poor, ignorant and learned, all shall be admitted, on condition solely that they wish to participate in the feast. Nothing indeed was stranger than the membership of the primitive Church. Philosophers, soldiers, common people, masters, slaves, Greeks, Romans, barbarians, the virtuous and the dissolute, all went pell-mell into the banquet-hall. Before being allowed to pass, they were asked, doubtless, if they believed in the reality of the Wedding of the Son of God with humanity by His Incarnation and His Redemption. They answered "Yes," and entered. They came in numbers great enough to do honor to the royal banquet. But the mere acceptance of the invitation was not enough to give one the right to seat himself at table and to remain there, no more than faith suffices to insure salvation. The feast requires a becoming dress, as the justification of the sinner demands the works that are the complement of faith. This is explained in the end of the parable. For God can welcome these guests arriving in confusion only when He finds in them, as a testimony of gratitude, at least the desire to honour their host by a correct attire and an attitude in keeping with the most elementary good manners. Grace impels man's heart by the gift of faith, but man's heart should respond to this invitation by works of salvation which, being partially the fruit of our liberty, constitute our merit.

"And the King went in to see the guests; and he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?" [16] One may, indeed, enter

[15] *Acts* xiii, 46.

[16] In the East, there is no one, however poor, man or woman, who has not one of these garments, or of these articles of clothing, a mere turban, conffieh or cincture, reserved for those feasts in which they never participate without some unusual preparation. Besides, in those lands, where men so easily

the Church through a frank profession of faith; one may even remain there without having the other Christian virtues; but he shall not enter heaven under like conditions. They alone shall be of the Church in heaven who shall have belonged not to the body, but to the soul of the Church on earth. Woe to the imprudent one who thought himself bound by no obligations in accepting the invitation! Thus severely questioned, the poorly clad man in the parable was silent. He had no excuse. Nor shall those condemned in the judgment of God, have more: it were easy to put on Jesus Christ by an active faith, by charity and justice! This obligatory garment was not impossible for any one to find; all that was required was to will to adorn one's self therewith. Indifference, presumption, the various passions incline many to suppose that a call to salvation is enough for one to be saved. *Pecca fortiter, sed crede fortius,* has it been said, and on this principle they betake themselves to the banquet in the dress of ignominy. The Pharisees thought, perhaps, to their great scandal, that Jesus' indulgence went so far, and that He promised salvation to all who would enroll themselves among His disciples. The Master protests against such detestable doctrine. He declares that the life of bliss is purchased by personal work, and that it is lost when one counts on dead faith to insure it.

"Then the King said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Such is the sentence that excludes the lost from eternal light. The banquet is given in the evening. To be driven from the hall, is to be cast out into the street where reigns the

fraternise in a common misery, any one is allowed to borrow his neighbours' clothes; so that at the wedding feasts of the very poor, beggars are sometimes seen completely transformed in extraordinary holiday attire. This is the wedding or nuptial garment.

darkness of night. Death leads us towards the splendor of God; if any unworthiness prevents us from attaining it, our lot shall be to languish for ever outside the hall where the others are rejoicing. What bitter regrets and what groaning!

Let the publicans and the Gentiles know that, if they are called to supplant the proud Pharisees and the obstinate Jews, this is no reason for believing that a first act of faith will enable them to take a seat for ever in the place abandoned by the former. Faith opens the gates of the Kingdom, but when it produces no works it cannot maintain our right to stay within them.

CHAPTER VII

TUESDAY: MORE QUESTIONING

THE HERODIANS AND PHARISEES—TRIBUTE TO CÆSAR—THE SEVENFOLD WIDOW—THE LIFE TO COME—THE GREAT PRECEPT OF THE LAW. (St. Mark xii, 13–34; St. Matthew xxii, 15–40; St. Luke xx, 20–40.)

THE Sanhedrim, defeated in the solemn interpellation it had essayed, withdrew; but it was then that the particular sects sought to avenge the general rout by coming, each in its turn, to set a new trap for the Teacher Who by His wisdom disconcerted all His adversaries.

The first group that presented itself seems to have been intentionally composed of very dissimilar political elements, inasmuch as Pharisees, the determined partisans of national independence, touched elbows with Herodians, the devoted friends of the Roman authority.[1]

This was assuredly a strange combination of people who cordially detested each other; but it is not a rare

[1] It is known how the Herods had become vassals of the Roman emperors, and by what bold enterprises the head of this dynasty, in particular, had sought to impose Cæsar's authority upon the Jews. Every nation has its types who are ready to enslave themselves in the hope of worldly success. The defection in the Jewish national party came from a lofty source. Manahem, President of the Great Council, passed over to Herod's camp with a great number of his most influential fellow-citizens. They constituted themselves a powerful faction which Roman cleverness pampered with secret or public favours, and which, although seeming to be grouped about the sons of Herod, was occupied especially with the interests of the empire. They were Romans rather than Herodians. Cf. Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiv, 13, 1; 15, 10; xvi, 9, 3.

thing to see such alliances, ill-starred though they may seem, suddenly formed under the influence of diverse passions and in a common interest. Besides, we may suppose, according to the text, that the Pharisees experienced a certain shame for such intercourse with the partisans of the foreigners. For St. Matthew observes that the chiefs held aloof and sent only a few of their disciples.[2]

One is not surprised to find a political question on the lips of such emissaries. Assuming for the occasion an air of affected righteousness, they came like scrupulous citizens to expose a perplexing case of conscience. It is their piety that moves them to put their question, as St. Luke indicates. "Master," they say to Him with hypocritical respect and flattery, "Master, we know that thou art a true speaker, and carest not for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth." This preface acknowledges that Jesus' independence gives assurance of His veracity, as His honesty guarantees His independence. "Tell us, therefore, what dost thou think; is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?"

At first glance we easily perceive the insidiousness of this question. By replying in the affirmative Jesus would alienate the people who were secretly champing the bit imposed upon them by Roman tyranny; He would destroy all the Messianic hopes founded on His manifestation, and declare that instead of throwing off the foreign yoke, He had come to accept it. Before such weakness the multitude could not fail to change from admiration to scorn, and from devotion to deep hatred. By responding in the negative—and His independent manner gave reason to believe that He would so do,—He would pose as a rebel and draw upon Himself chastisement from Roman au-

[2] He says: ἀποστέλλουσιν αὐτῷ τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτῶν

thority. Whatever His response, therefore, He would be either denounced to the people by the party of the patriotic Pharisees [3] as a coward who accepted the foreign yoke, or betrayed before Pilate by the faction of the imperialist Herodians as a rebel who was exciting the multitude by persuading them to refuse the tribute.

But these clever casuists had reckoned without the wisdom of the young Master which in the twinkling of an eye could grasp the knot of a question and solve it with a word. Between the alternatives imposed upon Him: God *or* Cæsar, there was a middle term, a third hypothesis, which was the true one: God *and* Cæsar. The two orders, human and divine, must not exclude each other. It is their function to exist side by side, to regulate man, the one in his public life, the other in his private life; the former governs the social life, the latter the religious. Cæsar must respect God's rights, and God in turn safeguards the rights of Cæsar. Unjustly do men strive to bring these two authorities into contradiction with each other. In the divine plan, the two powers should never clash, because they have their distinct spheres, their common origin, and, in different degrees, one and the same purpose: the happiness of mankind.

Jesus, perceiving their malicious intention, began by letting them understand what He thought of their scruples: "Why do you tempt me," He said, "ye hypocrites?" After which, resolutely taking up the difficulty proposed: "Show me the coin of the tribute," He added. They gave Him the coin [4] with which they were accustomed

[3] Josephus has said of the Pharisees: Μόνον ἡγέμονα καὶ δεσπότην τὸν θεὸν ὑπειλήφασι.

[4] St. Matthew, who through his former profession had become familiar with the various coins, puts on the lips of Jesus the customary term τὸ νόμισμα τοῦ κήνσου, whereas in *St. Mark* and *St. Luke* we find the much less precise word δηνάριον. Cf. Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiv, 10, 6; *Bell. Jud.*, ii, 16, 4.

to pay the per capita tax, a personal assessment very odious in the eyes of the people. It was the Roman penny stamped for use in Palestine. Jesus, having looked at it, said to them: "Whose image and inscription is this?" They replied: "Cæsar's," not suspecting that with a word they themselves broke the trap they had prepared. The solution of the difficulty was indeed to be found in their reply. If Tiberius Cæsar had the right to coin money with his image and inscription, it was because he was master of the country. Only he in whom the state is personified has the right to mark with his name and to cover with his responsibility the current values which, as money, are to serve in social transactions. The Jews admit this right in Cæsar, since they grant a legal currency to pieces struck with his image; therefore they recognise Cæsar as the real authority which regulates their destinies; therefore they owe him, together with obedience and respect, the tribute necessary for public affairs. The payment of this tax is not an act contrary to the will of God, Who has permitted Cæsar to become master of Palestine. But, on the other hand, by being a tributary of Cæsar one is not excused from being the servant of God. Each of these two kings has his respective rights. The Pharisees are mistaken in violating Cæsar's rights the more loudly to acknowledge those of God. Their patriotic fanaticism is contrary to divine law. The Herodians, sacrificing their national traditions and applauding the criminal encroachments of the state upon the religious domain, forget God's rights to give themselves wholly to Cæsar; they are even more culpable. To both parties Jesus points out their reciprocal errors; and His answer, brief and lucid, admirably sets forth the truth far from the extremes where they had put it: "Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's"—this was aimed

at the Pharisees who would not accept the claims of Rome —"and to God the things that are God's"—and this at the Herodians who gave but little thought to the claims of Jehovah. At this solution of the difficulty, so simple and so beautiful, His enemies began to admire Him Whom they had come to test.

Immediately, and as if to cover defeat by a fresh attack, another deputation presented itself to question Jesus again in the hope of embarrassing Him. This was composed of Sadducees. The Sadducees, as we have said, were the materialists of that epoch. They admitted, as a rule of faith, only the books of Moses—this was sufficient to prevent their exclusion from public office or even from the High-priesthood—and they were satisfied to look for the sanction of their virtues or their vices in the blessings and the ills of the present life. The mere cloak of the Mosaic religion sufficed for their spirit and their needs. They were in Judaism the cynical representatives of those coarse instincts to which the law-giver of Israel had had to make rather serious concessions. Such men, having considerable influence in the state—twice had they procured a general massacre of the Pharisees, their enemies—had, no doubt, become interested in the spiritual teachings of Jesus. They, too, desired, when the time should come, to have a part in that supreme struggle which the children of darkness were waging against the King of light and truth.

The difficulty they had prepared was based on the fundamental point of their materialistic doctrines, which was the denial of personal immortality and of the resurrection of the body. A passage in the law of Moses seemed to them to destroy radically the theories of Jesus on the future life. They derived from it, therefore, a singular objection which they at once came to propose to Him,

with that sarcastic, frivolous bantering on which men of their kind gladly pride themselves. Their ideas being inspired by their tastes, and their tastes being entirely carnal, since they denied the existence of the soul, the thought had struck them to ask Jesus to whom in the future life, if there were such a life, would belong the woman who, in this life, had had seven husbands in succession. This question appeared to them to be not only striking for its originality, but also quite embarrassing in its solution. "Master," said they, "Moses wrote unto us, that if a man die having no son, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up issue to his brother." Without citing the text, they gave the exact sense of the law of the levirate.[5] The starting-point of their objection was, therefore, incontestable. An imaginary fact, exaggerated according to the pleasure of these libertines, constituted its second element. "Now there were with us seven brothers; and the first took a wife and died without children; and the next took her to wife, and he also died childless. And the third took her. And in like manner all the seven, and they left no children and died. Last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise again, whose wife shall she be of them; for the seven had her to wife?" The conclusion drawn by them from these premises was, no doubt, that, since the authority of Moses seemed to every son of Israel as certain as the possibility of the fact alleged, there was nothing else to do than to reject faith in the resurrection, which created, at least in this case, an insurmountable difficulty.

It is by a general response that Jesus, at first, overcomes His adversaries. He cannot conceal from them the pity inspired in Him by their ignorance which betrays it-

[5] *Deut.*, xxv, 5, 6. See Benary, *de Hebr. leviratu.* Berlin, 1835.

self by so senseless an objection. These distinguished legists, who have come so ostentatiously to quote Moses to Him, know but little of him. "You err," He says to them, "not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." It was hard for their pride to hear themselves informed that they understood nothing either of Moses, whose authority they accepted, or of God, Whose existence they admitted without granting Him the power of raising the dead to a higher life comparable to that of the angels. Hard as it was, it was, however, true. The direct answer to the objection proves this. "The children of this world marry," Jesus says, and with a word He leads His enemies to the reality of a higher world, where their question no longer has any meaning, "and are given in marriage, but they that shall be accounted worthy of that world and of the resurrection from the dead, shall neither be married nor take wives. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." [6] Men marry, in the present life, to repair on earth the voids made by death, and to give to heaven the number of the elect determined by God from all eternity. But, in the future life, on the one hand, the just do not die, and, on the other, receiving each day new recruits who come from here below, they have no need of reproducing themselves in order to people the heavenly city. By their resurrection, God, Who has communicated to them His own immortality, has initiated them into a new life; they are become once more the children of Him Who created

[6] The antithesis between "the children of this world" and "the children of the resurrection" is worthy of remark. It is on this that the entire argumentation of Jesus is based. The first are, on earth, children of men and destined to generate other men; the latter are children of God and are called to live like the angels, in a world where God does not require the co-operation of His creatures to engender life.

them anew; their happiness shall then be to live, not as these men of the world, whose carnal[7] appetites Jesus stigmatises here, but like the angels, those pure spirits, who, enjoying God, scorn the gross pleasures of earth.

It is not unintentionally that Jesus evokes the memory of the angels before adversaries who pride themselves on not believing in them. Instead of solving simply an objection, He wishes to prove an entire thesis, and He does it with as much science as authority. Having answered, He proceeds to instruct.

If the Sadducees propose such a question, it is because they deny the future life, and they deny it because the books of Moses, the only ones that they admit, say nothing of it. But is this silence of the great Law-giver, which serves as a basis for their doctrines, as real as they think? In truth, a theologian with only the ordinary knowledge of the Jewish Rabbis might well be embarrassed in seeking to find in the Pentateuch an explicit text affirming the resurrection. For everything therein supposes it, and nothing seems to establish it.[8] But Jesus is of another school than the doctors of the Synagogue, and His eye can read where the eyes of His enemies had often gazed without seeing aught.[9] It is from words apparently insignificant, which suppose, without long demonstration, the reality of the future life, that the new Master causes the brightest light suddenly to shine forth. "And as concerning the dead that they rise again," He

[7] The accumulation of expressions: γαμεῖν, ἐκγαμίζεσθαι, or again ἐκγαμίσκεσθαι, is significant.

[8] Once more we refer to the article by Fr. Touzard, S.S., in the *Revue Biblique* for April, 1898. One is astonished to learn that the Sadducees, while acknowledging the authority of Moses, nevertheless deny the future life. Josephus, *Antiq.*, xviii, 1, 4; *B. J.*, ii, 8, 14.

[9] According to *St. Luke* xx, 37, Moses suggests ἐμήνυσεν, that the patriarchs, though dead to earth, are not dead to God, and that their life continues beyond the grave.

says, indicating that this was their secret thought and the basis of their objection, "have you not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush [10] God spoke to him, saying: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. For all live to him. [11] You therefore do greatly err." In the text of Moses, God says, in fact, not: *I have been*, but: *I am* the God of Abraham; but He cannot be the God of those who are no more, therefore these patriarchs, dead though they are to the world, are still living. They are so much alive that God declares Himself ready to fulfil the promises made to their faith, and the fulfilment of which shall insure their joy and their glory.

This proof, luminous though brief, absolutely topical, and thoroughly in keeping with the methods of Jewish theology, contained something so unexpected and so conclusive, [12] that the Sadducees were stupefied. They had acknowledged and used as an objection the authority of Moses; they were confounded by the same Moses. Those who had been defeated before them must have rejoiced at this repulse, and some Scribes, yielding to their enthusiasm, exclaimed: "Master, thou hast said well." [13]

[10] *Exodus* iii, 6, 15.

[11] The word αὐτῷ does not mean *in His memory*; that would not prove what Jesus wishes to establish, but *in relation* to, *in communion with Him.*

[12] To appreciate its conclusiveness the better, we should remember that in antiquity, the question of the immortality of the soul and that of the resurrection of the body seem to be confounded in one. The soul was not understood as living without the body, and Jesus, by proving, in a general way, the life of the patriarchs after their death, included in His proof not only the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the whole man. He meant to establish all that the Sadducees denied on this important question.

[13] This exclamation coming from the very mouths of our Lord's enemies, when we notice that these enemies were the Scribes, that is, the men of learning, who, taken unawares, suddenly forget the hatred they have in their hearts, is striking in its truth. It proves the authenticity of the documents whence St. Luke drew his information.

One of them, belonging to the sect of the Pharisees, ventured, however, to put another question. If he had come at first with malicious intentions, we perceive that he was deeply impressed by what he had just heard, and if he asks a question, it is rather that he may abide by his compact with those who have put him forward than really to engage in a controversy with Him Whose wisdom he admires.[14] "Master," he says, and by this title he proves his respect for Jesus,—"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" A legist, he speaks of what interests him. Besides, the question he puts was strongly controverted in the schools and among the Jewish sects. Pharisaical formalism beheld the chief point of the law in the articles that regulated man's exterior worship. Sadducean materialism sought it in the rewards or chastisements reserved in this life for faithful or unfaithful servants. Each doctor had his theory, which he defended beyond all limits. Jesus unhesitatingly expounds His. He had already done so on another occasion.[15] To expose it was to impose it, so striking was its truth. For Him the first commandment is that which goes straight to man's heart to regulate its movements. True religion can be only in the most intimate, the most generous, the most pure moral act of the soul, in the love that presents our homage, our works, and our life. This is what Jehovah

[14] In this way the two Evangelists may be made to harmonise. In *St. Mark* xii, 28, the Scribe seems to ask this question because he admires the wisdom of Jesus. According to *St. Matt.* xxii, 35, he seeks to try the Master πειράζων. These two motives may have existed simultaneously, especially since πειράζων does not always mean to try with malice. Cf. *St. John* vi, 6.

[15] It is not possible to join to this narrative in *St. Matthew* and in *St. Mark* the analogous question which we have found in *St. Luke*. Although in both cases a legist, νομικός, is asking a question, the circumstances are different. The question itself this time bears upon the supreme commandment, and not upon the conditions for salvation; here it is Jesus, and not the Scribe, Who utters the two great commandments; and finally the conclusion is different, as was the whole discourse.

had said to Israel, but Israel had not understood or had forgotten it. Jesus with a word leads the Jewish theology back to the heights whence the sectarian spirit had caused it to descend. "The first commandment of all," He said, "is: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind, and with all thy strength. This is the greatest and the first commandment." God has put it at the head of His law only to point out its undeniable excellence, and woe to the man who destroys the divine order! True religion consists in loving this God as our sole Master, that is, above all things. To love Him thus is, moreover, to insure the sanctity of our whole religious life. For, in such a love, moral perfection must necessarily find its principle and its term.

The Scribe had asked only the first commandment; Jesus insists on adding the second which sums up our duties towards men, as the first has our duties to God. If any one practises both, he has the fulness of justice. "The second," adds the Master, "is like to this." For like this, it also is addressed to man's heart and regulates its love. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The charity we must have for others should be great, attentive, devoted, like that which we have for ourselves. In other terms, God thus defines His two great commandments: for Himself, He demands supreme love that nothing balances, checks, or lessens; for man, He prescribes all the affection of which we are capable. "There is no other commandment greater than these," Jesus adds; "on these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets." Indeed, everything that has been prescribed or forbidden to Israel comes under one or the other of these two great and universal precepts.

The Scribe was enraptured by this splendid theory. "Well, Master," he exclaimed, "hast thou said in truth, that there is one God, and there is no other besides Him. And that He should be loved with the whole heart, and with the whole understanding, and with the whole soul, and with the whole strength and to love one's neighbour as one's self is a greater thing than all holocausts and sacrifices." With laudable perspicacity this man (to whom St. Irenæus [16] attributes also these words: "Long have I desired to hear such discourse, and had found it on the lips of no man") had grasped Jesus' whole thought. He understood and proclaimed that the best homage to give to God is indeed that of the soul in the sacrifice of an unbounded charity.

The possession of a fine intelligence in the service of a good heart is something. Jesus looking upon the Scribe said to him: "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." This was great encouragement for a soul in search of the truth. We must believe that grace did the rest, and that this legist became a believer.

Perhaps it is well to bring to a close here the incidents of Tuesday, which would seem to be overcrowded if prolonged so as to include the discourse on the end of the world. It is true that in the continuation of the account, no one of the three Synoptics, except perhaps the first,[17] furnishes any perceptible pause that would allow us to pass on to the following day. But we know them to be given to these chronological oversights which are sufficiently explained by the oral or spoken Gospel which was their real source. Besides, by supposing that Tuesday ended with this triumph of Jesus, we avoid having Wednesday entirely given over to silence. And again,

[16] St. Irenæus, *C. Hæres.*, i, 17.
[17] *St. Matt.* xxii, 41.

the agreement between Judas and the Sanhedrim will be seen to have been caused directly either by the disciple's misunderstanding of the discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem, or by the fury aroused by Jesus' anathemas against the Pharisees and the hierarchical faction.

CHAPTER VIII

WEDNESDAY: JESUS ASSUMES THE OFFENSIVE

Son of David, and David's Lord—Silence of the Pharisees—Denunciation and Malediction—The Widow's Two Mites. (St. Matthew, xxxii, 41, xxiii, 39; St. Mark, xii, 35–44; St. Luke, xx, 41, xxi, 4; and xiii, 34–35; xi, 37–54.)

The trial had proceeded far enough. In vain had each faction measured its strength with the divine Teacher. Their defeat seemed as humiliating as it was complete. The latest incident had even presented the rather rare phenomenon of an adversary loyally surrendering his arms to pass over to the camp of Him Whom he had come to attack. They therefore deemed silence the better part, and Jesus was enabled to enjoy His triumph indisputed.[1]

Returning at once to the thesis which He was developing when the Herodians had come upon the scene, He determined to give to those of His hearers, who desired it, the true idea of the Messiah. He Himself had been questioned long enough to have the right to question others. Turning, therefore, to the Pharisees, who formed a considerable group: "What think you of Christ?" He said to them: "whose Son is He?" [2] "David's," they

[1] *St. Mark* xii, 34; *St. Luke* xx, 40.

[2] Here, again, we notice a slight difference between *St. Matt.* xxii, 41 and the two other Synoptics. The former relates, in effect—and his text appears

replied; for such was the universal teaching of the Rabbis. "How," returns Jesus, "say they that Christ is the son of David? For David himself, inspired by the Holy Ghost, calls him Lord in the book of Psalms,[3] saying: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool. If David then call him Lord, how is He his son?"

To reply to this question one had to have a knowledge of the twofold nature of the Messiah. As the Pharisees knew nothing of this, the question rose beyond their knowledge. But it forced itself on them, none the less, as an evident difficulty. It was impossible to deny the

to us the better—that Jesus led the Pharisees, by first questioning them, to start the difficulty which he wished to raise, viz., Christ is the Son of David. St. Mark and St. Luke suppose that Jesus regards the Davidic sonship of the Messiah as commonly taught by the doctors of the Law, and His reasoning starts from what appears to Him a settled fact. This variation proves once more the absolute independence of our Evangelists. It is explained, like the others, by the hypothesis of different documents to which the oral Gospel was at first consigned.

[3] It is remarkable that Jesus attributes *Psalm CIX* to David (*St. Luke* xx, 42), and that he calls it inspired by the Holy Ghost (*St. Matt.* xxii, 43; *St. Mark* xii, 36). That David was the author of this psalm is plainly announced in the title which it bears, "*A Psalm of David*," and not "*to David*," as several have wished to translate it, exceptionally and contrary to all rules. The particle ל, according to custom, indicates the proprietorship, the source, and, consequently, the paternity of the psalm. But if David is the author of *Psalm CIX*, he cannot be the subject of it. And, as a matter of fact, we see him introduce a personage who unites in himself the priesthood and the kingship, which he (David) has never done, and which no one has done, as long as there existed, living and distinct, the tribe of Judah, with its privilege of furnishing the kings, and that of Levi with the same for the priests. The Messiah alone will bear on His head the double crown of princedom and of priesthood, because with Him the ancient covenant will have an end. Hence come the title of "My Lord" (*Adonai*), and the equality whether of power or of glory with Jehovah—at whose "right hand" He (the Messiah) must take His place—which David attributes to Him who is to come. It is not, then, in order to conform Himself to the common belief that Jesus took *Psalm CIX* as being David's, even though it were, in reality, the work of a contemporary glorifying David (this is Ewald's opinion), or even of a poet of the time of the Maccabees glorifying Jonathan (which is Hitzig's theory). These prejudiced and partisan hypotheses clash with the authorship even of the text, and cannot be made to agree with the idea which we must have of Jesus Christ. True criticism has done justice to them.

Messianic sense of the psalm quoted. The whole Jewish tradition acknowledged it, and David, with the energetic precision, the bright imagery, and the mysterious depth that characterise his genius, had neglected nothing to make the hero of his canticle recognisable. It is Jehovah Who speaks to a Lord of David. This Lord shares the throne of Jehovah Himself, and is associated in His omnipotence. His birth is before time; He goes forth from Sion to achieve the conquest of the world, and to establish, through many catastrophes, His empire over all peoples. David and his posterity have had only the royal power; the sons of Levi have kept in their hands the spiritual power of the priesthood; but this conqueror of the world, Who is to come in the course of ages, shall unite upon His own head the two crowns of gold and silver of which Zacharias [4] shall speak later on: the crown of the monarchs and that of the pontiffs; He shall be priest and king like Melchisedech. But if, on the one hand, it is indeed of the Messiah and of His work that David meant to speak, and if, on the other, it is certain that this Messiah is to be the Son of David, how explain that the Messiah shall be at the same time the Son and the Lord of the royal prophet? A single word were enough to give the answer; but to find this word it was necessary to have understood the divine Scriptures, and the Pharisees had never penetrated beyond their surface. The Messiah is the Son and the Lord of David, because in Him there are two distinct natures; He is man and He is God; as man, He is descended from David and is really his son; as God, He is begotten by God the Father in eternity, and, God like His Father, He is, by every title, David's Lord. Isaias [5] had clearly indicated this in calling Him Wonder-

[4] *Zacharias* vi, 11.
[5] *Isaias* ix, 6.

ful, God, the Mighty, the Child that is born for us; the prophet Micheas, too, had indicated this in distinguishing two births of the Messiah; one, in time, at Bethlehem, and the other in eternity.[6] But the Pharisees instead of pondering over these revelations which were to illumine the future of mankind, rather revelled in hair-splitting distinctions over the ceremonial laws. Of true religion they knew nothing and taught nothing.

At this question they at once took refuge in arrogant silence. Then Jesus, no longer checking His indignation, solemnly denounced to the people the detestable sect which, from the beginning of His public life, had never ceased to persecute Him and to impede His work. His words soon took on a terrible accent, and, before announcing the judgment of Jerusalem and the world, He began without pity to hurl His accusations against those adversaries whom in His charity He had vainly endeavoured to convert.[7]

"The Scribes and the Pharisees"[8] He said, "sit on the chair of Moses.[9] All things, therefore, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do." Their right is undeniable. To sit on the throne of a king is to succeed him and to inherit his power. To sit on the chair of Moses is to inherit his authority. In virtue of this, Jesus acknowledges first of all that men owe them respect

[6] *Micheas* v, 2.

[7] St. Mark and St. Luke have only a very succinct summing-up of the fine discourse preserved by St. Matthew; but, what they say has indeed the same tone, color and sense as that which we read in the first Synoptic.

[8] The Scribes are here placed first as the teaching body with a special responsibility. Josephus calls them, not Scribes or γραμματεῖς, but "commentators of the law," ἐξηγηταὶ νόμου, *Antiq.*, xvii, 6, 2; 9, 3; xviii, 3, 5; xx, 2, 4, or again "the men of science," σοφισταί, *Bell. Jud.*, i, 33, 2; ii, 2, 1, etc. Juvenal, *Sat.* vi, 544, says: "*Interpres legum Solymarum.*"

[9] Moses, *Exod.*, xviii, 13, sat in judgment of the people, but the chair, *Kisse* or *Katedrin*, in the Talmud, taken here as symbol and sign of doctrinal and legislative authority, was in reality only at a very late date used in teaching in the Synagogues. *Acts* xxii, 3; Vitringa, *Synag.*, p. 165.

and obedience. In whatever hands it may reside, legitimate authority is ever sacred; but one may, while respecting it, despise the unworthiness of those who bear it. In every one of these Pharisees and Scribes, who are become the guides of God's people, there are two men: the official representative of the religious hierarchy, and the private individual with his vices or his virtues. As doctors of the Synagogue, teaching the law of Moses, they have a right to be obeyed. As private men they must not pose as models, for their conduct is detestable. "But according to their works," continues Jesus, "do ye not." [10] And in a few words He sketches a vigorous portrait of these false devotees, of these absurdly vain men, veritable Tartuffes of the time: "For they say, and do not."

Their hypocrisy does not stop here. It pretends perfection in strange aspirations; it recommends extravagant and innumerable religious practices, leaving to others the care of fulfilling them. "For they bind heavy and insupportable burdens; and they lay them on men's shoulders; but with a finger of their own they will not move them." It is in order that they may appear to be prodigies of virtue that they exert themselves to multiply thus the conditions of sanctity. The more they raise and render unattainable the ideal of perfection, the more they hope to be admired, by inspiring the belief that they have realised that which they were able to conceive. Hence that never-ending increase of ceremonial observances that render the religious life impossible by their excessive and tyrannical character. The wretched people are overladen with these ceremonies like a beast of burden bent beneath his load.

[10] The Targum of Jerusalem, on *Numb.* xxiii, 19, says: "Homines dicunt, sed non faciunt"; and in Chagigah, fol. 15, 2: "Memineris doctrinæ ejus, et non operum ejus."

As for these zealous innovators, true tyrants over consciences, they are satisfied once they have made men believe in their own eminent virtue. It matters little to them that honest souls pursue, without ever attaining, the object they have proposed. They, at ease and proud of having thus merited public consideration, judge that they have nothing else to do but enjoy it. It is not even certain that they observe in secret the essential points of the divine law. God's eye is less redoubtable to them than man's. To seem and not to be, it appears, is their motto in matters of virtue and religion.

This is why, when they have gained a hearing by their doctrines, they seek to be admired in their deportment. Thus they write upon their clothing the story of their pretended perfection, so that the passers-by may read it; but they preserve no trace of it in the depths of their hearts, with which to reassure their consciences. "And all their works," continues Jesus, "they do for to be seen of men; for they make their phylacteries broad and enlarge their fringes." Hypocrisy, even more than the other vices, has its ridiculous features. It shows every whim of veritable folly. From a passage in Exodus,[11] they had concluded that the Israelite ought to carry on his arm or on his breast the memorial of the benefactions and of the precepts of his God. The Pharisees literally covered their bodies with long parchments on which they had written, though not for the purpose of observing them, their rule of life. Moses had willed that the Jew should attach a fringe to his mantle to be distinguished from the Gentile and to remind him of the law.[12] The Pharisees, by multiplying the length of these symbolical *ziziths*, meant to exhibit and to spread the horror they had for the Gentiles,

[11] *Exodus* xiii, 1–16; and *Deut.* vi, 4–9; xi, 13–22.
[12] *Numb.* xv, 38; *Deut.* xxii, 12; *Zach.* viii, 23.

and the fidelity with which they observed the precepts of Jehovah. In their opinion these were a talisman against both the demon and ill-luck.[13] What a fantastical picture was that of these hypocrites covered with amulets from head to foot, on their foreheads, on their shoulders, on their arms, and enveloped in mantles adorned with blue fringes of most pretentious size! Jesus does not tell how they walked striking their feet against the pebbles for the sake of mortification, or closing their eyes in order not to look upon women;[14] He let us divine the details of this vigorously sketched portrait, in which He seeks principally to inform us of their moral ugliness.

Moreover, these bold impostors, in their extreme pride, thought themselves called upon to demand everywhere the homage due to their incomparable piety. "And they love the first places at feasts," again says the Master; "and the first chairs in the Synagogues, and salutations in the market-place, and to be called by men, Rabbi." As we have already observed, their affected piety tends to nothing else than this. They pretend to be saints, exceptional men, only to procure for themselves the consideration of the people. Pride and self-interest are the sole motives of their seeming virtue.

"But," says Jesus, turning to the disciples who were listening, deeply moved and perhaps disturbed by the vehemence of His words, "be not you called Rabbi; for one is your Master, and all you are brethren. And call

[13] The favours attached to the wearing of these phylacteries were numerous if we may judge from the words with which they were recommended: "*Observate præceptum meum de Tephilim, ego id ita vobis imputabo, ac si dies noctesque in lege mea sudaveritis.*" Cf. Buxtorf, p. 1743. Lightfoot and Schöttgen give curious citations on this subject.

[14] The Talmud of Jerusalem, *Berachoth*, ix, near the end; *Sota* v, 7, and that of Babylon, *Sota*, 22, give us the nomenclature of the Pharisee *Nikfi*, who walks dragging his legs; of the Pharisee *Schikmi*, who walks bent over, of the Pharisee *Kizaï*, who walks with eyes closed, etc., etc. (See St. Epiphanius, *Adv. Hæres.* xvi, 1.)

none your father on earth; for one is your father, Who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master, Christ." Such, indeed, is the fundamental character of Christianity that all human individuality is lost before the God Who dominates, creates, and governs all. There are no great and true dignitaries in the new society but God and His Christ. If the language of the Church retains any honorary titles to distinguish degrees in the hierarchy, faith explains and corrects them by recollecting that the Church sees in her doctors only representatives, more or less imperfect, of the universal Doctor, Who is the Holy Spirit; in her spiritual fathers only the images of the heavenly Father, Who through them communicates life to souls; in her directors or masters only the representatives of the great Master of the Church, Jesus Christ.[15] In no other way has Christian custom tolerated the special denominations that the Master seems to forbid.[16] The radical difference between the Pharisees and us is found in the sense attributed to the words which Jesus means to proscribe. The Pharisee deemed himself a doctor by his own knowledge, father by his own superiority, guide by his own light; the Christian, in accepting these names, knows that he derives nothing from himself, but everything from God, Who has communicated to him in greater abundance the gifts of knowledge, paternity, and direction. In these titles addressed to him, he sees homage done to Him on Whom he depends, and he rejoices in it. This is the only reason for tolerating them, for, as souls, all Christians

[15] Jesus beholds in the diverse degrees of the hierarchy, fathers, doctors and spiritual directors, the representatives of the three great influences which the Holy Trinity exercises in the Church.

[16] We see St. Paul giving himself the title of *father* over the Corinthians (*I Cor.* iv, 15); he calls Timothy and Titus his sons in the faith (*I Tim.* i, 2; *Tit.* i, 4); and St. Peter says the same of Mark (*I Pet.* v, 13).

are equal before God. They are all brothers, all disciples, all sons; and if the Lord is pleased to bestow on some the mission of representing Him for the special needs which the life of the Church involves, such a grace only obliges them to greater humility. This is what Jesus declares as He explains His thought, for the following words prove that He admits a legitimate hierarchy: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Then suddenly He turned again upon His enemies, and exclaimed in a formidable voice: "But woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for you yourselves do not enter in; and those that are going in you suffer not to enter." Like an insuperable obstacle, the wicked servants of God place themselves at the door of the Church, not to enter, but to bar the passage. Their malice endeavours not only to deny themselves light, but to prevent others from seeing.

"Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour the houses of widows,[17] praying long prayers! For this you shall receive the greater judgment." These false devotees, under pretence of doing good to others, succeeded in pursuing and finding opportunities of doing good to themselves. They lodged themselves in the houses of unfortunate widows, turning to advantage their grief as well as their piety. They brought their consolations, offering to aid the bereaved ones with their spiritual counsels and prayers, and, con-

[17] We read in the Talmud, *Sot. Hier.*, fol. 20, I: "*Inter plagas, quæ a Pharisæis proveniunt, etiam hæc est: Est qui consultat cum orphanis, ut alimenta viduæ eripiat.*" And of a widow thus robbed, it is said: "*Plaga Pharisæorum tetigit illam.*"

cealing under fine words their covetous aims, they managed to devour there not only sumptuous banquets, but even the very fortunes of the hospitable house. Thus they transformed religion into an instrument of gain, an opportunity for feasting, a means of enriching themselves, and this at the expense of unfortunate and worthy women; it was a hideous sacrilege.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte;[18] and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves!" Proselytism of evil-doing cannot but be an abominable crime. It is a hunt for souls to kill them and to cast them into the abyss. Pharisaism does not take from them the vices they already had, it entangles them in others just as detestable, namely, hypocrisy, obstinacy and pride. That is why the sons it gains are, twofold more than itself, sons of hell. What a frightful paternity it dares to seek!

"Woe to you, blind guides, that say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but he that shall swear by the gold of the temple, is a debtor. Ye foolish and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple, that sanctifieth the gold? And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, is a debtor. Ye blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar, that sanctifieth the gift?" Strange casuistry, of which we have seen elsewhere examples no less fantastic. Thus did these false doctors run astray amid the absurd distinctions inspired in their diseased minds by self-interest and vanity.

[18] The proselytism of the Jews at this epoch was very ardent at home and abroad. Cf. Schleusner, *Lex. Heb.*, on this word, and the curious work of Danz in *Meuschen, N. T. è Talm. illust.*, p. 649 *et seq.*, as well as Wolf, *Cur.* on *St. Matt.* xxiii, 15.

But all these teachings, by disturbing consciences, only caused faults to be multiplied, and served no good purpose. Here the truth is restored in a few words by Jesus. It is admirable for its simplicity: "He therefore that sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it and by all things that are upon it; and whosoever shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by Him that dwelleth in it; and he that sweareth by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by Him that sitteth thereon." Nothing could be clearer than this theology, and henceforth the distinction of great and small oaths has no foundation. Every oath brings in God as the guarantee of man's word, and consequently binds him who makes it.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you tithe mint, and anise, and cummin, and have left the weightier things of the law: judgment, and mercy, and faith!" Moses [19] had prescribed tithes of the fruits and products of the earth. The Pharisees understood this commandment in the most rigorous sense; and to the last vegetable of their gardens, everything, according to them, owed to the priests its legal tax.[20] This was an excess of zeal, but it would not have been in any way blamable, if it had not contrasted with the most criminal laxity in matters of far greater importance. To pay insignificant tithes while trampling under foot the most essential precepts of morality, was to cover one's self with the mask of perfection while remaining profoundly recreant. "These things," says Jesus, "you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone.

[19] *Lev.* xxvii, 30 and *Paral.*

[20] There could be nothing more ridiculous than the exaggerations to which they lent themselves, according to certain traditional precepts (*Babyl. Jorma*, f. lxxxiii, 2). See Lightfoot and Wetstein on *St. Matt.* xxiii, 23. They thought it a crime not to conform to them: Tr. Sanh. f. 83, 1: "*Qui comedit non decimata, reus est mortis.*"

Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!" [21] Such is the inconsistency of hypocrites.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,[22] because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but within you are full of rapine and uncleanness!" None of the vices avails itself of the appearances of virtue more easily than injustice or lust. It is especially when disguised that these two passions attain their object. One easily plunders the property or the honour of others when he succeeds in passing for a just and austere man. "Thou blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, that the outside may become clean." This is the great Christian principle that clashes with all Pharisaism. Purity comes from within. External lustrations cannot be more than an emblem, a sign. When the heart is pure, it purifies all the rest; but the contrary is not true. The purity of the body does not involve the purity of the soul, and the latter alone is pleasing in God's sight.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you are like whited sepulchres,[23] which outwardly appear to men beautiful, but within are full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness! So you also outwardly indeed appear to men just; but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." As He spoke, Jesus glanced perhaps in the direction of the Cedron where as usual

[21] *Levit.* xi, 4.

[22] Schöttgen, p. 198, quotes a curious sentence from *Mdr. Esth.*, 1, fol. 101, 4: "*Decem portiones hypocriseos sunt in mundo, novem Hierosolymis, decima vero in toto orbe terrarum.*" The *Psalter of Solomon*, iv, 7, says of the Pharisees: "οἱ ἐν ὑποκρίσει ζῶντές."

[23] Some have thought that this was an allusion to the Jewish custom of marking with chalk those places where the dead were buried, to prevent passers-by from becoming impure for eight days. This is not the Saviour's thought. He wishes to call attention to the proud magnificence that causes the dead to be forgotten, and not to the prudence that revives their memory.

each year about the middle of the month of Adar,[24] the tombs here and there along the western slope of the Mount of Olives had just been whitewashed. The sight of the tombs of the prophets drew from Him another cry of indignation.

"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, that build the sepulchres of the prophets, and adorn the monuments of the just, and say: If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets! Wherefore you are witnesses against yourselves, that you are the sons of them that killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, generation of vipers, how will you flee from the judgment of hell?"

Thus Jesus returns to the thought that dominates Him, namely, that of His approaching death. He knows the plot His enemies have laid against Him, and He pitilessly unmasks them. These hypocrites pretend that they would not have dipped their hands in the blood of the prophets, of those just men whose tombs they restore and adorn; and they are on the very eve of immolating the sole Just One, the Great Prophet Whom they have in the midst of them! Veritable vipers, who hide beneath the flowers of their fine words the venom of their hearts! They have a horror of the blood of the just, and yet, after having shed that of Jesus, they will shed that of the Apostles. "Therefore, behold I send to you prophets," continued the Master, "and wise men, and scribes; and some of them you will put to death and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city."[25] Thus the measure of all

[24] Schekalim, i, 1. "*Quintodecimo mensis Adar emendant vias et plateas, etc., et pingunt sepulchra.*"

[25] Incomplete though the history of the Apostles may be as it has come down to us, we know with what awful exactitude all this was realised.

crimes shall be filled, and the hour of chastisement shall come. God has waited in patience until this moment, but now His justice will avenge the present and the past. "That upon you may come all the just blood that hath been shed upon the earth from the blood of Abel the just, even unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias,[26] whom you killed between the temple and the altar. Amen, I say to you, all these things shall come upon this generation." Thus speaks the Son of God in the name of justice.

But, at the same time, the Son of Man cannot check in Himself a movement of affectionate tenderness as He

Stephen stoned to death, James beheaded, Peter, Simeon son of Cleophas, crucified, all of them hunted, pursued like wild beasts, to say nothing of the cruelties inflicted by the Jews on Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles; such is the story of the Apostolic generation.

[26] We need not hesitate to identify this Zacharias as the one who, at King Joas' command, was stoned to death in the court of the Temple. Jesus intends here to cite the first and the last murder mentioned in the history of the Old Testament, that of Abel (*Gen.* iv, 8), and that of Zacharias (*II Paral.*, xxiv, 20 and 21). Compare Josephus, *Antiq.*, ix, 8, 3, who dying had said: "The Lord see and require it!" The murder of the prophet Urias, although later, is recounted only in *Jeremias* xxvi, 23. Jesus does not speak of this murder because He had in mind only the book of *Genesis* which was the first, and the book of *II Paral.* which was the last of the series of Historical Books admitted in the canon of the Jews. In *St. Luke* xi, 51, where we find only a fragment of the discourse reproduced here according to *St. Matt.* xxiii, Jesus does not name the father of Zacharias, and many, in order to remove the difficulty, suppose that, in reality he had not been mentioned. If we accept the text of *St. Matt.* xxiii, 35, just as it is, there arises a great difficulty since it says that Zacharias was the son of Barachias, whereas, according to *II Paral.*, xxiv, 20, he seems really to have been the son of Joïada. Shall we lay the blame on some translator or copyist who in the act of writing, had in mind, quite erroneously, the prophet Zacharias, who was in truth the son of Barachias, *Zach.* i, 1, but who was by no means the one here meant? Shall we admit that Joïada was also called Barachias, or that Barachias was the grandfather, not the father of Zacharias? These are some solutions of the difficulty. At any rate, we may not say that this was the Zacharias who was killed by the Zealots, *B. J.*, iv, 6, 4, and whose death forty years later Jesus here prophesies, for an aorist cannot be taken as a future, and, besides, the father of this Zacharias was called Baruch, not Barachias; still less, whatever may be the opinion of Baronius and others who follow the *Protev. Jac.*, 23, can it refer here to the father of John the Baptist.

thinks of His ungrateful and ill-fated fatherland. His sorrow has an accent that penetrates us with emotion. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children, as the hen doth gather her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not!" Here His words seem to be broken with a sigh. "Behold," He adds, "your house shall be left to you desolate." [27] He already sees the Roman legions preparing to exterminate this faithless people. Grief and desolation follow in their wake to avenge so many crimes. He Himself will depart to return no more until the terrible day of judgment. "For I say to you," He says, "you shall not see Me henceforth till you say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Before that day what tears Israel shall shed! Jesus shall return to His people only on the clouds of heaven. Then it will be to judge the world. Then only shall the Jews, converted at last, acclaim Him amid the ruins of the universe.

After this vehement denunciation, the Saviour prepared to leave the Temple. Although He quitted it for ever and under the influence of deep emotion, His retreat was so majestic and solemn as to impress all who beheld Him.

For an instant, perhaps, to wait for His disciples, He stopped and sat down in the women's court, opposite the treasury of which we have spoken elsewhere. It was here that each one came to deposit his alms in the thirteen boxes, *chofarot*, the openings of which were formed like trumpets. He watched attentively this spectacle of official charity. Many opulent persons had passed along, having pompously deposited their rich offerings. A poor

[27] God will abandon Jerusalem and the final result will be devastation: ἐρήμωσις, *St. Matt.* xxiv, 15; *St. Luke* xxi, 20.

widow came in her turn, and, approaching the treasury, she piously placed therein two mites, or about two-fifths of a cent.[28] She had two; necessity might have moved her to keep one, but in her faith she preferred to give all she possessed. Jesus was touched by the greatness of this poor woman's soul, and, turning to His disciples, He said to them: "Amen, I say to you, this poor widow hath cast in more than all they who have cast into the treasury." She had given not gold, but her heart which was far more. "For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want cast in all she had, even her whole being."[29] It is not the quantity, but the quality that constitutes the value of alms. What a distance between this widow, who gives to God all she has, however little it may be, and the Pharisees, who, in the name of God, devour the wealth of rich widows, however prosperous they find them!

This incident was a consolation to the Saviour, in the midst of the hypocrisy and the impiety that surrounded Him.

[28] St. Mark, who wrote for the Romans, gives the value of her alms in Roman language. It was equivalent to a *quadrans* or a quarter of a cent.

[29] The word ὑστέρημα in *St. Luke* xxi, 4, signifies deficit, less than enough to live on; and in *St. Mark* xii, 44, ὑστέρησις, a financial condition unequal to one's needs.

CHAPTER IX

JESUS AND THE GREEKS IN THE TEMPLE ENCLOSURE

JESUS AND THE GREEKS—THE INTERVIEW WITH JESUS—PHILIP AND ANDREW—THE DYING GRAIN—TO GLORIFY THE FATHER—THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN—THE CLOSE OF THE MINISTRY. (St. John xii, 20–36.)

AT the close of a struggle as painful as it was fruitless, God had reserved for Jesus a certain compensation. That very day, probably,[1] and while He was still in the Temple, from the court of the Gentiles, contiguous to that of the women, there suddenly arose a most significant demonstration which was a happy omen for the future. St. John has carefully heightened this ray of light in a picture that soon darkens, and thus has most fittingly filled in a gap in the Synoptics.

At this moment when the rupture with Israel was becoming more and more pronounced, and when Jesus, discouraged by the inconceivable obstinacy of the Jews, was about to withdraw definitely from the Temple, it is interesting to see the Gentiles make advances to the Sa-

[1] St. John who says nothing of what took place in the Temple after the triumphal entrance of Jesus, tells us this incident of the Greeks, and takes occasion of it to enable us to see in the Master's soul the emotions which, according to the Synoptics burst forth only in the Garden of Gethsemane. Inasmuch as it concludes with the final rupture with Israel, and as Jesus henceforward refrains from appearing among the people (*St. John* xii, 26), we ought logically to place the incident after the discourse in the Temple, and before the prophecy concerning the end of the world.

viour to attract Him to themselves. Thus it is that some ask leave to reap the fruits rejected by others.

The Greeks, of whom St. John speaks, were Gentiles who went up to Jerusalem each year to adore Jehovah. They must not be confounded with the Greek-speaking Jews, who lived in pagan lands. We speak here of people Greek in origin and in speech.[2] It does not even appear that they had made a profession of Judaism by circumcision, otherwise Philip's and Andrew's hesitation, before bringing them to Jesus, could scarcely be explained, any more than the Saviour's allusion to the chasm that separated them from Judaism. They were indeed of the number of those foreigners who, though not belonging to Israel, as Solomon says in his prayer for the consecration of the Temple,[3] thought themselves obliged, nevertheless, to come from the most distant countries to pray in the house of the Lord, because the name and the power of Jehovah had reached even to them. In an epoch when the pagan religions were falling into universal discredit, it is not astonishing to find Gentiles thus adoring the God of the Jews, and constituting, as it were, a sect of deists in the pagan world. The Acts of the Apostles notes their existence.[4]

Struck with all that they had heard said of Jesus,[5]

[2] In *St. Mark* vii, 26, we find the Syro-Phœnician woman qualified as a Greek. Here these foreign worshippers are called Ἕλληνες, and not Ἑλληνισταί. Comp. *Acts* xvi, 1; *St. John* vii, 35.

[3] *III Kings* ix, 41.

[4] *Acts* xiii, 43, 45; xvi, 14; xvii, 17.

[5] Although the Gospel calls them Greeks and not Syrians, a very ancient tradition says that they were sent by Abgar, King of Edessa. In a most respectful letter, this king wrote to Jesus, "that having heard tell of His miraculous works, he had concluded that He was God. If He deemed Himself unhappy among His people, He had only to have recourse to him. His city was large and beautiful, and would well suffice for both of them." By a written answer which is quite in the style of our Holy Books, our Lord, thanking him for his gracious offer, replied that after His Ascension He would send him one of His disciples to cure him. The king had a disease

these Judaising Greeks desired to see Him near at hand, and perhaps even to invite Him to come and carry the Gospel into their countries. The Master's significant act in driving the sellers from the Temple in order to restore to the Gentiles the place which had at all times been reserved for them, was an encouragement to these men of good will. The breadth of view which, as every one said, characterised the Reformer, gave them the belief that the Kingdom of God would be opened to all mankind, and the attitude of the Jews loudly proclaimed that the hour had come for all to enter in.

It was to Philip of Bethsaida in Galilee that they addressed themselves to insure the success of their undertaking. Judging by his name, this Apostle may have belonged to a family that spoke Greek, many such being found on the frontiers of Galilee. It may be that these Greeks themselves had come from one of the cities of Decapolis, where they formed a considerable portion of the population. In most respectful terms,[6] they said to him therefore: "Sir, we would see Jesus." It was not, as with Zacheus, through pure curiosity that they wished

from which he eagerly desired to be delivered (leprosy, according to Cedrenus, *Hist.*, p. 145, and the gout, according to Procopius, *Bell. Pers.*, ii, 12). At the same time He promised eternal life to Abgar and his people. Eusebius, from whom we have these details (*H. E.*, i, 13), asserts that he has them from Syriac documents preserved at Edessa. In the fifth century, Moses of Khoren, in his *History of Armenia*, ii, 30–33, reproduces them with some important additions. According to him, Jesus sent His portrait to Abgar. Abgar wrote concerning Jesus to the Emperor Tiberius, to Nerses, King of Assyria, to Ardaches, King of Persia, etc. In a decree by Pope Gelasius, *De Libris Recipiendis*, in 494, the correspondence of Christ with Abgar is classed among the Aprocryphal writings (see Hefélé, *Hist. des Conciles*, vol. III, p. 223), together with the *Shepherd* of Hermas, the *Itinerarium Petri*, etc. See the question of authenticity discussed by Lipsius: Die *Edessenische Abgar-Sage*, Braunschweig, 1880. Also J. Tixeront, *Les Origines de l'Eglise d'Edesse*, 1888. Abgar's letter and Jesus' response appear to have been placed sometimes above the doors of certain houses as a protection for the occupants. Abgar's Epistle had just been discovered at the entrance of a dwelling in Ephesus at the very time when the writer was visiting the excavations in 1899.

to see Him, but with the intention of conversing with Him seriously. The vague formula which they employed is meant to soften their demand, which will be the better received the more modest it seems. At bottom their intention is easily divined, and Philip, although accosted with unusual respect—they treated him ceremoniously as a lord—determines not to prefer so grave a request himself. Circumspect, as we have seen him to be,[7] he is desirous of seeking another's advice at the first opportunity, or perhaps of enlisting an influence greater than his own in order to succeed. It is to Andrew that he betakes himself. This latter, also Greek in name, was, like him, from Bethsaida, and his chosen companion.[8] Besides, Andrew was able to appeal with success to the credit of his brother Peter. They appear, however, to have been the only negotiators in this affair. As the question of the admission of the Gentiles into the Messianic Kingdom was a very delicate matter—the Apostles could not have forgotten Jesus' reply to the woman of Canaan—they determined not to take it upon themselves to present the Greeks to Jesus without first having obtained His consent. They, therefore, transmitted to Him the wish of these strangers with the request that it should be granted.

It was consoling, in the midst of the asperities of that day, to see these pagans thus bravely knocking at the gate of the Messianic Kingdom. The Magi had hastened from the East to hail the Messiah at His birth; the Greeks come to-day from the West to behold Him before His death. Jesus was deeply moved. To receive them as disciples would have been the height of scandal

[6] Courtesy was a characteristic note of Greek education.
[7] *St. John* vi, 5 *et seq.*; xiv, 8, 9.
[8] *St. John* i, 44.

to the Jews. He did not entertain this thought for an instant, but at once His mind recurred to that terrible approaching event, that was to close up the abyss cut by sin between the Gentiles and the true God. It is only when He is raised up between heaven and earth that He can effectively attract the universe. Up to that hour the Gentiles must remain outside the Kingdom. He has been sent only to the people of the promise, and if at times He has turned towards others, it was to announce, by rare exceptions, the great revelation which the future holds in store. We do not find in the text of St. John what reply Jesus made to the proposal of the Greeks. He seems to have been wholly absorbed in the deep emotion caused by their conduct. At any rate, we do not find that He said anything discouraging to them. On the contrary He declares that their official reconciliation shall soon be effected.[9] "The hour is come," He says, "that the Son of man should be glorified." The proof of it is seen in this step on the part of the Gentiles, provoked, according to all appearances, by the very ingratitude of the Jews. Humiliation for Jesus necessitates glorification! This is what He means in the following words, an easily intelligible prophecy of His approaching end: "Amen, amen, I say to you," He exclaims, "unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, itself remaineth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The figure, although assuming a shade in harmony with the character of His hearers—for it is well known what part the grain of wheat played in the Greek religion—was none the less striking and terrible for its truth. If it is to be multiplied, the grain of

[9] It is even probable not only that He gave ear, as He passed through the court of the Gentiles, to those who had solicited an audience, but even that these Greeks, closely following Philip and Andrew, heard the touching discourse He uttered on this occasion.

wheat must come forth from the storehouse, where its life remains sterile, fall into the furrow, pass through the ordeal of decomposition, burst its envelope under the action of the moisture that corrodes it, and it is in its corruption that, by most wonderful phenomena, it succeeds in reproducing itself. So He Himself, the divine seed reserved by the Father to make truth spring up in the world, must taste death ere He propagates life. His sacrifice is, in effect, the act by which He creates the Church, or the society of the just. His paternity, with regard to us, comes from this, no less than His doctrine. The Cross has obtained for the world the grace of understanding and of practising the Gospel.

"He that loveth his life," [10] He concludes—and in speaking thus He means to dictate to His disciples their duties for the future much more than to derive encouragement for Himself—"shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal." The Apostles must be deeply convinced of the need of personal sacrifice, repressing each day their natural life in order to transform it into spiritual life, when it does not lead on to the supreme and bloody witness of martyrdom; without this the conversion of the world were impossible, and, notwithstanding its infinite merit, the Redemption would be ever vain, no one possessing the charity to apply its fruits to mankind. "If any man minister to me," He says again, "let him follow me." To minister means here to participate in His work of reparation, to propagate the Gospel, to be a soldier of

[10] The text of *St. John* xii, 25, says "his soul," *τὴν ψυχὴν*, as well as that of the Synoptics, *St. Matt.* x, 39; xvi, 25, et parall. This word is taken here again for the natural life of which the soul is the principle, the life which develops under the influence of the soul. Let us recall here St. Augustine's beautiful commentary on this passage: "Amor ut pereat; odium ne pereat; si male amaveris, tunc odisti; si bene oderis. tunc amasti."

the Prince who advances to the conquest of the world; and to follow means to share His thoughts, to imitate His example, to have, perhaps, the same lot. "And where I am, there also shall My minister be. If any man minister to Me, him will My Father glorify." They shall have sacrificed their life, following the Master's example; they shall find it again with Him in eternity, and, companions in His martyrdom and in His sacrifice, they shall be so, too, in His glory and in His reward.

Thus, for the sake of these Greeks, for whom the ideal of human life consists in well-being and in the free enjoyment of every pleasure, He preaches abnegation, renouncement, and immolation. He looks upon all this first of all as His own duty, and then as that of His faithful. But this picture of the moral and physical sufferings that await Him, and among which the Cross appears ignominious and bloody, deeply moves His soul. We have here the prelude of the agony in Gethsemane. St. John, although writing the Gospel of the Word, does not hesitate to reveal to us the Master's soul under its most human aspect; if he has not recounted the final struggle that Jesus underwent face to face with the Father's justice and man's malice, he has clearly indicated its terrible forerunners in the present passage.[11] "Now is My soul troubled," exclaims Jesus. The simplicity of this avowal discloses in the depths of His heart a combat of which He is not ashamed. Yet a few hours, and far more keenly He will feel dread, loathing, sadness, torturing His soul and drawing from His body a bloody sweat. The present is only nature's first

[11] We already saw in *St. Luke* xii, 49 and 50, a first manifestation of that interior anguish which Jesus experienced in contemplating His approaching immolation. It becomes more accentuated in the present account of St. John. It bursts forth most sadly in the Garden of Olives, and the three Synoptics then agree in depicting it.

shudder. The Evangelist's account broken by hesitation, almost rough, proves the violence of His emotion. In His sudden trouble, the Master adds: "And what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause I came unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name!" For all the labours of His life have been in preparation for this decisive moment of immolation, and would He ask to delay it? No, however awful the ordeal, He feels in His heart a sentiment that prevails over this reasonable terror: it is the desire to glorify His Father. All perplexity ceases at once, and He cries out: "Before all else, Father, glorify Thy name!" Love, generous, violent, heroic in expression, reaches to the Father's heart; for from the heights of heaven a voice suddenly resounded above the heads of the multitude: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." God's great work in the world, by the Gospel, is only just beginning. The future shall have glories for the King of Heaven other than those of the past. It is enough that Jesus should provide the needed starting-point, which is His Cross, and the results shall not be long in coming. This thought fortifies His heart against the greatest fears.

The most distant portion of the multitude, or, perhaps, the least apt to grasp divine manifestations, took God's voice for a thunder-clap, and concluded that heaven had responded favourably to Jesus' wish.[12] Others nearer

[12] It is quite true that God has frequently responded by a thunder-clap to the prayer of those who invoked Him. Thus (*I Kings* xii, 18): "Samuel cried unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder. . . ." (See *Ps.* xxix; *Job* xxxvii, 4; *Ps.* xviii, 13; *Exod.* ix, 23.) The pagans themselves often interpreted this awful noise of nature as a favourable response from heaven. Thus does Ulysses after his prayer, and he rejoices. (*Odyss.* xx, 103.) But here it is a voice that is taken for a clap of thunder, and not thunder that is taken for a voice. The hearers are divided only on the question whether it is the voice of thunder or that of an angel; but for all it is a voice. Besides,

and above all better acquainted with heavenly things, thought they recognised an angel's voice. The Apostles alone seem to have distinguished God's words. Thus does the Father renew, at the moment when His Son's humiliation is about to begin, the testimony that He had given to Him at the outset of His glorious career, in the waters of the Jordan, and later on in the midst of His public life, on the mountain of the Transfiguration. Powerful as a peal of thunder His voice proclaims the definitive approach of the New Law, the coming triumph of the Messiah and the judgment of the world. "This voice," says Jesus, "came not because of Me, but for your sakes." For, that the Saviour's soul might be encouraged and fortified, it was enough for Him to hear God's word in the silence of His heart. For the world an impressive sign was needed; and it has just been given it. When thunder announces the storm, man must be on the watch. Greeks, Jews, Apostles, must look attentive to the great struggle that is about to begin and to the revolution that is to follow it. "Now is the judgment of the world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out." To be judged is to be condemned or absolved, struck down or freed.[13] Jesus here means, in effect, that the world shall be both condemned and saved; condemned in its works, which till then have been bad, and the iniquity of which the mystery of the Cross shall make known; in its representatives who shall choose to remain

it would be somewhat surprising that St. John should allow himself to interpret confidently, unhesitatingly, a rather dubious response, if it had been only a noise of nature.

[13] Scripture takes the word *judgment* sometimes in an evil sense, sometimes in a favourable acceptation. In the first case it signifies condemnation, a terrible sentence; thus it is said in *Jeremias* and in *Ezechiel: the judgment of Moab, the judgment of Egypt*, etc. In the second, it denotes deliverance, as in the passage of *Psalm* cxxxix, 13, or, again, of *Isaias* i, 17. *Judgment for the widow and the poor.*

impious, unjust, and guilty after the great lesson they are going to receive; and, last and more than all, in its king who shall be vanquished and driven out. This same world shall be judged, that is, saved, because the Satanic yoke that lay heavy upon its head shall be shattered. Judaism, in its blindness, awaits a Messiah Who will march to the conquest of the nations, and deliver it from the servitude of the foreigner. This Messiah is really come: but the only enemy Whom He claims to destroy and crush is Satan, the prince of the world, and the deliverance which He will insure is that of souls. The Cross shall be the instrument of His conquest. He thrills with joy at this, and, forgetting the pains that are attached to it, He sees Himself already on His bloody throne reigning in the place of the dispossessed usurper, Satan.[14] "And I," He says, "if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all things to myself." From the infamous gibbet, the altar on which the Victim offers Himself, grace is to radiate as from its focus over the entire world. Doing violence to no one, but like a powerful lodestone, it shall attract all men. And, in fact, for eighteen centuries, it has awakened souls everywhere, invited them, drawn them on. Such is the admirable royalty that Jesus has attained. Satan had established himself the centre of fallen humanity by the concupiscence which he cast into man's heart; Jesus will establish Himself the centre of mankind restored by the grace He shall bestow. This latter is the antithesis and counter-weight of the former.[15]

The people, only half understanding this language,

[14] Compare *Coloss.* ii, 14–15.

[15] Some have desired to see in these words "*lifted up from the earth*" an allusion to His eternal reign in heaven. Although this latter triumph is included as a consequence in the victory of the Cross, it is not natural to think that Jesus refers to it here. His influence in attracting mankind is

were scandalised. "We have heard out of the law," they exclaimed, "that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou: The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" There is ever the same embarrassment for those who will read in the Scriptures only that which suits their earthly notions, their national prejudices. The Messiah triumphant on earth and establishing His eternal Kingdom there in the midst of the Jewish people who share in His glorious royalty; that is all that they have seen in Isaias,[16] in the Psalms,[17] and in the book of Daniel.[18] This was enough for them. They closed their eyes to all else. In vain did Isaias [19] point out his Messiah coming in triumph through suffering, humiliation and death; they did not notice it. In vain did Daniel himself prophesy a violent death for the Son of Man; [20] they did not believe it. And they boldly invoke the Law or the Scriptures to contradict Jesus. Evidently it is an objection inspired by malice; the Master will not deign to respond to it. But the words full of pity and tenderness that now fall from His lips prove that His heart has been bruised once more by the incredulity of His people.

"Yet a little while," He says with emotion, "the light is among you; walk whilst you have the light, that darkness overtake you not. And he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. Whilst you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of light." The Master speaks of Himself henceforth only

exercised by the Cross, even in the course of the ages. No doubt it is from the height of heaven that He now influences the religious destiny of the world; but this influence comes from the Cross, as the principle in the past and as a means in the present. The Evangelist rightly says, therefore, that Jesus signified by these words the death that awaited Him, *St. John* xii, 33.

[16] *Is.* ix, 6.
[17] *Ps.* cix, 2–4.
[18] *Dan.* vii, 14.
[19] *Is.* liii.
[20] *Dan.* ix, 26.

as of a life that is dying. It is the last hour of His apostolate. After His death, the disciples will strive for a few days more to open the eyes of the incredulous people, but the useless endeavour shall not be long. The Spirit will bid them go and bear the torch of faith among the Gentiles.

Jesus seems to have uttered these words without further comment. In them we may perceive the supreme preoccupation of His soul. "These things Jesus spoke," says the Evangelist, "and He went away and hid Himself from them." Israel had no other summons and no other farewell to expect.

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT PROPHETIC DISCOURSE

From the Top of the Mount of Olives—Three Questions and Three Pictures—The Approaching Doom of Judaism—The Uninterrupted Judgment of the Church—Parables—The Final Judgment of Mankind. (St. Matthew, xxiv and xxv; St. Mark, xiii, 1–37; St. Luke, xxi, 5–36.)

Having quitted the Temple,[1] the Master took the road to Bethany across the Mount of Olives. The ascent was steep. Suddenly as if fatigued after so painful a journey, He stopped and, turning around, cast a long, sad look over the city which, in spite of so many miracles, was still hardened in its unbelief.

It was a moment when the setting sun shed only a dim light on the walls of the Holy City. Bathed in the twilight, the Temple, like an immense vessel anchored in harbour, stood forth in the grandeur of its harmonious and majestic lines. It was an impressive sight.[2] The dis-

[1] The first two Synoptics alone point out that Jesus had left the Temple when He pronounced His discourse on the end of the world; but an expression which St. Luke takes, perhaps without seeing all its bearing, from the document which he uses—ταῦτα ἃ θεωρεῖτε—indicates that they were seated sufficiently far from the splendid building to be able to *contemplate* its beauties in their entirety.

[2] On several occasions, toward the close of day, we have seated ourselves, in a dreaming mood, on the rocky side of the Mount of Olives, endeavoring, in imagination, to reconstruct this splendid picture. Certainly the same

ciples while admiring it, remembered that Jesus, on that very day, had predicted the ruin of this wonderful structure. One of them, therefore, in order to lead Him back to this absorbing subject, or merely with the intention of drawing Him away from a contemplation that was the more painful for being so silent, exclaimed: "Master, behold what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!" But Jesus, Whose heart was filled with sadness, was far from sharing their enthusiasm. "Seest thou all these great buildings?" He said, "Amen, I say to you, the days will come in which there shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down." [3] This had long since been written in the book of Daniel,[4] and in all probability even admitted by the Rabbinical tradition of those times.[5] Nevertheless this categorical assertion astonished the disciples. With the Temple destroyed and the Messiah put to death, what indeed, could the Messianic reign then amount to? Their minds were in a whirl at such a thought. Four disciples only, Peter, James, John and Andrew,[6] were at the time near Jesus, either because the others in a separate group, had already gone on tow-

golden hues of the setting sun flooded the ancient city so many times rebuilt and stretched out before us, as in a winding sheet. Alas! no more are to be seen the ancient palaces, towers, and Temple. Here is the dome of the Mosque of Omar, further on, the green and blue cupolas of synagogues; below there are some Christian buildings, slim minarets, works of mediocrity, very powerless to recall the splendors of the past. A few gigantic stones, half-buried in the earth, at the south-eastern corner of the Haram, are all that remain of the marvellous buildings which Jesus and His disciples had then under their eyes.

[3] It has been, with great justice, pointed out that if this prophecy had been imagined, after the event, its inventor would not have neglected to introduce in it an element which is wanting, viz., the burning of the Temple, which took place before its destruction.

[4] *Dan.* ix, 26.

[5] Schœttgen, *Hor. Hebr.*, ii, p. 525, *et seq.* Glœsener, *De Gemino Iud. Mess.*, p. 145, *et seq.*

[6] Andrew who completed the first group of Apostles is here joined with the three privileged ones who had been the witnesses of the most important events in Jesus' life. It is by St. Mark (xii, 3) that the company surrounding the Master at this time is reduced to these four disciples. According to

ards Bethany, or because in reality the Master had chosen to reveal to them alone the awful secrets of the future.

At this moment, St. Matthew and St. Mark observe, Jesus seated Himself. He was, as it were, crushed beneath the weight of the woes which His soul contemplated. Before His prophetic gaze there passed simultaneously the approaching judgment of Judaism, the future and uninterrupted judgment of the Church, and the definitive judgment of mankind: three pictures striking, as a whole, but, inasmuch as each was to be the symbolic prelude of the other, implying a similarity and even a confusion of lights and shadows in which we must behold the history of the world. The Apostles crowded around Him, and anxiously asked Him: "Master, tell us when these things shall be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming and the consummation of the world?" For them these three questions are really only one, and indeed St. Luke has reduced them to this: "When shall these things be?" In the future one thing alone interests them, the coming of the Messiah King. Although they have been somewhat weaned from their material illusions concerning the character of the Messianic Kingdom, this same kingdom seems to them none the less an era of happiness, of rehabilitation, of reward, and they long for it with all their hearts. Henceforth, more Christian than Jewish, they seem ready to sacrifice the Temple or even the incredulous nation, if only they may soon behold the triumph of Jesus Christ above the ruins. The Master answers them. They shall know when the prophecy that threatens Judaism is to be fulfilled. They shall

St. Matthew (xxiv, 3) it seems all were present, but without taking any other part—"κατ' ἰδίαν." St. Luke (xxi, 7), has not even this restriction. Really, it is St. Mark who seems the most exact, and, as always, the most dramatic. He makes Jesus sit on the slope of the Mount of Olives "facing the Temple," and carefully names His hearers.

learn to look for His coming not with enthusiasm but with fear; for that coming shall be the coming of justice upon the Church and upon each one of her members in the course of ages. Finally, He will announce His definitive reign, not for this life, as they hope, but for eternity. Such seems to be the plan of the discourse which St. Matthew in particular has preserved us in its full development. These three great divisions correspond, moreover, to the questions the Apostles had asked.

To their first question: "When shall the destruction of Jerusalem come?" Jesus replies by forming a picture of the dreadful woes that shall precede the fall of official Judaism. The perturbation will be general: false Christs seducing the multitudes, warlike agitations, disturbances of nature, violent persecutions of the disciples. Then in reality shall be the beginning of the end for the accursed city: abomination shall be in the holy place, and divine wrath shall come upon the children of Israel. One last attempt will the powers of seduction make to disturb Jesus' work, and in this supreme effort of men and of the elements against Christ, in the midst of general upheaval, as an end to every woe, the Son of Man will come to inaugurate His reign in the universe.

"Take heed that no man seduce you," says Jesus, "for many will come in My name saying: I am Christ, and the time is at hand! And they will seduce many." Israel would be given up to false Messiahs, because she had sinned against the true Messiah. God, in punishing the impious, allows them to turn most frequently to superstition. There is, besides, a characteristic sign of times of social decay and of universal misery in the appearance of these men with extraordinary missions, who in their audacity come to increase the public calamities by their lies and to turn them to their own profit. There were

never more false prophets than in the time of the captivity.[7]

We have not at hand enough historical elements to prove the fulfilment of this prediction, and the embarrassment which, it would seem, it must cause the exegete proves again that it was not made after the event. Were that the case, a more careful calculation would have been made according to the historical data. But even if false Messiahs before the destruction of Jerusalem are not mentioned by Josephus, we must not conclude from this that they did not exist. It may be that the Jewish historian refrained through political prudence from presenting in a religious light the public disturbers whom he points out,[8] just as he had deemed it wise to say scarcely anything of Christ Himself. The Christ according to the Jews was to free Israel from the foreign yoke, following the words of the disciples of Emmaus. What, then, were the intentions of all these Goëls or liberators of whom Jewish history speaks? Of that Theudas [9] who, under Cuspius Fadus, governor of Judæa, was massacred with the multitude to whom he had promised to separate the waters of the Jordan with a single word that they might pass over dry-shod? Of all those other saviours who called the crowds into the desert to give them a spectacle of the greatest prodigies? Of the Egyptian who assembled more than thirty thousand men on the Mount of Olives in the hope of seeing the walls of the Holy City crumble at his command, and who succeeded only in causing his followers to be massacred by the governor Felix while he himself took to flight? [10] We need not mention those religious revolutionaries of whom

[7] *Jerem.* xxix, 8, 9; xiv, 13; *Ezech.* xiii.
[8] *Antiq.*, xx, 51; 8, 6; *Bell. Jud.*, ii, 13, 5; vi, 5, 1.
[9] *Acts* v, 36.
[10] *Acts* xxi, 38.

sacred history alone tells us, but who also represented themselves as Messiahs: Simon Magus, who called himself the power of God:[11] and Dositheus who, according to Origen,[12] gave himself the title of Christ.

To this religious agitation shall be joined social agitation. "And you shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that ye be not troubled; for these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; then shall be pestilences and famines and earthquakes in divers places, and terrors from heaven, and there shall be great signs. Now all these are the beginning of sorrows." By this Jesus wishes His disciples to understand that they are not to interrupt their Apostolic labours in Jerusalem at once, and to break up the first Christian nucleus before the proper time. However terrible may be the rumbling of the tempest, they must never be affrighted by it. The true sign shall be made known ere long. When they discern it, then it will be necessary for them to hasten and go, escaping the terrible destruction to bear the truth to a new world.

The second part of the picture which the Master draws of the signs which were the forerunners of the national catastrophe, is historically as faithful as the first. Not to speak of the wars that broke out around Judæa, of the struggles of the two Jewish brothers, Asineus and Alineus against the Parthians,[13] of the Jews massacred in Alexandria or in Babylon, we know that Palestine became at that time the scene of intestinal conflicts, of bloody revolts, of civil wars that prepared its final ruin. "Every city,"[14] Josephus says, "seemed to be divided

[11] *Acts* viii, 9.
[12] *C. Cels.*, lib. ii, and in *Matt. tract.* xxvii.
[13] *Antiq.*, xviii, 9, 1.
[14] *B. J.*, ii, 17, 10; 18, 1–8.

into two hostile camps." Syrians and Jews believed that they could not live together unless they kept their hand on the hilt of the sword. Cæsarea, Tyre, Gadara, Ptolemais were witnesses of these sanguinary struggles. At the same time the people, alarmed by the reports of war elsewhere, trembled lest they should see the land invaded. Now it was Caius Cæsar that was preparing to chastise the Jews for having refused his statue a place in the Temple. Now it was Bardanes and then Vologeses that declared war against Izates, King of Adiabene,[15] or again Vitellius, governor of Syria, that was about to lead his army through Palestine against Aretas, King of Arabia,[16] when the death of Tiberius occurred.

The famine under Claudius was terrible, not only in Greece and in Rome, but also in Jerusalem,[17] where, according to Josephus, the misery was so great that it provoked the sympathy of Izates and of Helena, his mother.[18] It was probably on this occasion that St. Paul set about gathering alms everywhere for the destitute in Jerusalem.

The plague, especially in the Orient, is only too frequently a consequence of famine, for one to doubt, simply because of the silence of history, that it raged in Palestine at the time of which we speak.[19]

Earthquakes were felt in the reigns of Claudius and of Nero, in Asia Minor, in the Isle of Crete, in Phrygia, at Apamea, at Laodicea, and in several other cities.[20] This was more than was required to increase the popular terror; "for," as Pliny said, "all the evil and all the danger are not in these violent shocks of the earth; unfortunately,

[15] *Antiq.*, xx, 3, 3.
[16] *Antiq.*, xviii, 5, 3.
[17] *Acts* xi, 28.
[18] *Antiq.*, xx, 2; *Acts* xi, 28.
[19] We know, moreover, that it made at the time terrible ravages in the neighbouring countries, for example, in Babylonia.
[20] Tacitus, *Annal.*, xiv, 26; xv, 22; Oros., *Hist.*, vii, 7.

they are but the forerunners of catastrophes that equal or even overshadow them." The imagination of the multitude, excited by a general upheaval of the world, endeavours at such times to discover fearful signs even in the depths of the skies.

However, between these sinister signs and the catastrophe itself there shall be an interval. Ere it dies, Judaism, by a violent persecution, will prepare the glorious coming of Christianity. In its folly, and as if to divert its thoughts amid these sad presentiments, it will treat the disciples as it treated the Master. But its fury shall only serve to intensify against itself the vengeance of God. "But before all these things," adds Jesus, "they will lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to councils and to the Synagogues, and into prisons, dragging you before kings [21] and governors for My name's sake.[22] Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall put you to death,[23] and you shall be hated by all nations. And it shall happen unto you for a testimony." Thus the ordeal shall proceed along parallel lines both for obsolete Judaism and for nascent Christianity. But what a difference! the latter brings the sacred fire of generosity, of faith, of love; the former has naught but its egotism, its incredulity, its hate. The one shall be the executioner, the other the victim; the vic-

[21] Peter and John appeared before the Great Council, James and Peter before Herod, Paul before Nero. The governors Gallio, Felix, Festus, saw the great Apostle at their tribunal; not to speak of the many other witnesses who went courageously to declare their faith before judges and executioners.

[22] We must recall here the beautiful text of Tertullian in his *Apologetics: Credunt de nobis quæ non probantur, et nolunt inquiri, ne probentur non esse; quæ malunt credidisse, ut nomen illius æmulationis inimicum præsumptis, non probatis, criminibus de sua sola confessione damnetur. Ideo torquemur confitentes, et punimur perseverantes, et absolvimur negantes, quia nominis prælium est.*

[23] Stephen and James are proofs of this.

tim will give testimony to the truth, which shall not die, while the executioner with his violence shall never succeed in keeping falsehood alive. Falling at last himself beneath the blows of divine justice, he shall by his death mark the providential hour of the triumph of those whom he sought to suppress.

Meanwhile nothing shall be lacking in this the first tempest to shake the young shrub, neither the fury of enemies nor the treason of friends, nor the trials of the heart nor anguish of spirit. "And then," says Jesus, "shall many be scandalised, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.[24] And many false prophets shall arise [25] and shall seduce many. And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold. And the brother shall betray his brother unto death, and the father his son; and children shall rise up against the parents, and shall work their death." What a lively picture of the woes of those early times, when nothing was certain for the disciples except the love and the support of their God!

"And when they shall lead you and deliver you up," added Jesus, "be not thoughtful beforehand what you shall speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist and gainsay." This promise was so well fulfilled that children were known to silence the wise and the judges of the world; ignorant men to astonish science by their philosophy, and young maidens to disconcert the

[24] Such was the lot of Physellus, Hermogenes, Demas, and many others whose names Sacred History has not preserved.

[25] These are the false doctors of every name, Hymenæus, Philetus, Simon Magus, Carpocrates, Cerinthus, Ebion, and the many others whom St. Paul calls ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα, *Acts* xx, 30; ψευδαπόστολοι, II *Cor.* xi, 13, etc.

executioners by their courage. Strange, too, they converted the crowds that came to the prætorium or to the circus through curiosity; sometimes even the judges and the torturers became Christians. It was to humiliate the martyrs that the latter came to these public exhibitions, to which they dragged the Christians as culprits and as victims; but in reality they had only succeeded in gathering audiences whom the disciples overwhelmed by their glowing words, and among whom they achieved the most surprising conquests. Let the disciples only be brave, therefore, and they shall march on, in spite of all, to victory. "But a hair of your head shall not perish.[26] In your patience you shall possess your souls. He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved." This personal triumph of the disciples at the end of their sufferings shall lead up to the general triumph of the Christian cause. "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come." The seed of the new religion being scattered throughout the world, the ancient tree of Judaism may easily be uprooted. No less shall have been required than this time of preparation for the laborious birth of the Gentiles in the Gospel; through the midst of all upheavals, all perils, all persecutions, the courageous toilers shall have laid the foundations of the edifice. Nothing shall then prevent the storm from bursting over the Temple and over Jerusalem; God shall henceforth have as His city all the cities of the earth, and as His temple the whole world.

The faithful must needs be on their guard in those times, if they do not wish to be included in the punish-

[26] There is no contradiction between this promise and the preceding assertion that "some of you they will put to death." For, what Jesus asserts here shall have its fulfilment only in the future life, where he who shall have lost his soul shall find it again.

ment of the wicked. Until now they may have been able to remain in security beneath the tempest that rumbled but did not burst forth. But if, at this awful moment, they should be still in Jerusalem, even God would not know His own. And it is important that His own be spared, for they are the living nucleus of the primitive Church and the hope of the future. Henceforth strong enough to break with all Judaical prejudices, enlightened enough to know that Mosaism has had its day, vigorous enough to be transplanted with impunity, they may quit the Holy City in a body and take to the mountains without disbanding. Their bond shall consist no longer of ceremonial observances, but, wholly spiritual, it shall take deep hold upon their very souls. That is why, even though they separate, in spite of distance, the disciples shall still hold each other by the hand, and the various churches which they shall found shall be all together united in the same faith, the one great and universal Church of Jesus Christ.

"When therefore ye shall see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel [27] the prophet, standing in the holy place: he that readeth [28] let him understand," that will be the decisive moment.

St. Luke, who does not mention this text of Daniel, seems to explain its true meaning: "When you shall see,"

[27] Even if the prophecy of Daniel ix, 26, 27, which has its complement in xi, 31 and xii, 11, did have its first fulfilment in the persecution of Antiochus and the death of Onias, it would not follow that its final accomplishment was not to be found in the death of the Messiah, in the persecutions that followed this, in the destruction of the Temple and of the Holy City. Jesus is wholly within His rights when He cites here a prophecy of which He is the principal object.

[28] This parenthesis is probably the Evangelist's, for Jesus, in speaking, was not thinking of readers, and the word ἀναγινώσκων signifies especially one who reads. If we say that it is the Master Who is referring to Daniel's words, we encounter another difficulty, namely, that this parenthesis is found in St. Mark, who does not mention Daniel, as well as in St. Matthew,

he represents Jesus as saying, "Jerusalem compassed about with an army, then know that the desolation thereof is at hand." It is not a sacrilege in the Temple, but the very presence of enemies around the Holy City that constitutes the abomination, and from it shall come, as a consequence, ruin or desolation. Titus, in fact, ensnaring the city in an iron network, and making the Mount of Olives the central point of his military operations, seemed to erect the altars of paganism before the very doors of the Temple. We know how the Roman legions wore, as badges, bucklers on which were graven the images of the gods and of the emperors. The soldiers venerated them, and Suetonius relates that Artabanus, after having crossed the Euphrates, adored the eagles and the standards of the empire. Tacitus even likens to a temple these resplendent exhibitions of eagles and standards adorned with the effigies of the gods and the emperors, which the armies were eager to have in quantities during a campaign. The Jews looked upon the mere presence of these ensigns as a profanation of the Holy Land. They rose against Pilate, who had secretly introduced them into Jerusalem, and they besought Vitellius, as he advanced to fight Aretas, to spare them the great pain of seeing them pass through their land. It is with difficulty, moreover, that any other explanation of these prophetic words can be given. They can, indeed, only signify a profanation preceding the destruction of the city. Therefore we cannot accept them as referring to the impiety of Adrian in erecting his statue, seventy years later, on the spot where the Temple stood, nor to any

who does mention him. It is therefore the Evangelist who here appeals to the reader, not Jesus Christ appealing to His hearers. But in this case the Gospel was compiled before the fulfilment of the prophecy, otherwise the warning to pay attention to the advice that follows, in order to escape destruction in the catastrophe, were superfluous.

similar enterprise attempted by Titus, but not mentioned in history, since either would be later than the sacking of Jerusalem. Nor are the massacres in the Temple, occasioned by the sect of the Zealots, this abomination [29] of desolation. Human blood had at other times been violently mingled with that of the victims. Such occurrences were only too frequent, and the prophet's words indicate a new sacrilege, hitherto unheard of, such as was the investment of the city by the Roman armies.

"Then," continues Jesus, "let those who are in Judæa flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst thereof, depart out, and those who are in the countries, not enter into it; for these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled that are written." The storm shall be terrible; they must flee to escape its bolts. The walls of the Holy City, however impregnable and terrifying they may be, shall no longer protect the citizens, and the fierce obstinacy of the Jewish generals shall prevent the clemency of the victors from being exercised towards the vanquished. The inhabitants of Jerusalem and those of the country, no longer cherishing vain illusions about glorious resistance and national independence, must then seek a refuge in the mountains, which alone can protect them. They must decide at once, for once the struggle has begun the Jewish leaders will slaughter those who seek to fly or to surrender, and the Roman soldiers will grant no grace to those whom the vigilance of the Jews has suffered to escape. "And let him that is on the house-top, not go down into the house, nor

[29] Josephus, who, in Book IV, ch. vi, of his *Wars of the Jews* mentions the opinions of some concerning the fulfilment of Daniel's prophecy by the excesses of the Zealots, declares categorically in *Antiq.*, Book X, ch. xi, § 7 that Daniel had prophesied the terrible woes with which the Romans were to overwhelm the Jewish race: "Δανιῆλος καὶ περὶ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἡγεμονίας ἀνέγραψε καὶ ὅτι ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἐρημωθήσεται, κ. τ. λ.

enter therein to take anything out of the house; and let him that shall be in the field not turn back to take up his garment." The least delay may be fatal. The roofs in Judæa formed a series of platforms reached by an outside stairway, and Jesus bids them descend and run to the gates of the city without even entering the house to get anything whatsoever.[30]

"And woe to them that are with child, and give suck in these days! But pray that your flight be not in the winter or on the Sabbath." [31] The precautions to be taken against bad weather or because of the Mosaic prescriptions would check their flight and risk compromising everything. Sudden as the lightning, then, was to be the approaching catastrophe. Nothing could be more frightful than these ravages.

"There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, till the times of the nations be fulfilled." [32]

A million Jews were massacred, ninety-seven thousand led captive into Egypt and into the other provinces of the empire, the Temple razed, the ruins of the Holy City trampled beneath the feet of the victors, and all this in the midst of the horrors of famine, despair, and tyranny. This humiliation of Jerusalem shall last until the nations have had their day, that is, unto the end of time.

"In those days there shall be such tribulations as were

[30] It is in this same hyperbolic sense, although in a lower degree, that the man in the field, who went out in light clothing to engage in his labours, in keeping with Virgil's words: *nudus ara, sere nudus*, is bidden to flee without his outer garment, or cloak.

[31] Not that the Christians have to bother with Pharisaical observances. But to scorn them at a time when the fanaticism of the Pharisees shall dominate, would be to incur the gravest dangers.

[32] The time of the nations shall end with the world.

not from the beginning of the creation, and neither shall be." It was right that the consummation of the greatest of crimes should be punished by the most dreadful of expiations. The destruction of Jerusalem by Nabuchodonosor, the captivity of Babylon, were only figures of the definitive ruin and captivity. They were so many warnings that might have corrected this hardened people and spared them their complete ruin. It pleased them to brave all the wrath of God, and they have felt its fearful weight.

"And unless these days have been shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened." The capture of Jerusalem, though preceded by a long siege, came, in truth, sooner than was hoped. Josephus [33] and Tacitus [34] give the reasons of this. This precipitate *dénouement* saved the lives of a portion of those who had escaped the violent persecution of the extreme patriots. Jesus calls them the elect, either because they are already Christians, surprised by the siege before they could escape, or because they were to become such in consequence of so severe a lesson.

After this catastrophe Judaism disconcerted will eagerly seek the Messiah. Its burnt Temple, its ruined city, its strength for ever annihilated, shall force it to long for the era of national restoration. It is by a spontaneous and quite natural movement that vanquished and ruined peoples search everywhere, and easily give a welcome to men with a superhuman mission. Here the desire shall be the more energetic, since it shall be sustained by a religious conviction. Israel shall not be able to believe that the prophets had been mistaken or that God had forgotten His promises, and will call for the Messiah.

[33] *B. J.* v, 12, 1.
[34] *Hist.*, v, 2.

The Christians themselves affrighted by such great disasters, and still influenced by Judaical prejudices, shall almost believe that the Christ is going to return to restore all things. Impostors shall not be wanting to respond to these vain aspirations of a nation crushed beneath divine justice.

"Then if any man shall say to you: Lo, here is Christ or there, do not believe him; for there shall rise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, in so much as to deceive (if possible) even the elect." The disciples must consider this a sufficient warning. There shall be no further personal or permanent appearance of the Messiah on earth. "If, therefore they shall say to you: Behold he is in the desert,[35] go ye not out; behold he is in the closets, believe it not." The great coming of the Saviour in time after His Resurrection shall take place, to be sure, but under other circumstances. "As lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together." [36] With this great picture the Saviour passes on to the second question treated in His discourse: How shall the coming of the Son of Man be accomplished?

In the same hour in which faithless Jerusalem shall cease to be, a Jerusalem of believers shall begin. While the children of Israel, under the curse of God, are seek-

[35] The popular uprisings were generally prepared in the desert. There also had lived the great leaders or prophets of the people of God: Moses, Elias, John the Baptist.

[36] The word ἀετός in this popular proverb does not mean the eagle, which does not eat dead bodies; but the great vulture, which among the ancients was confounded with the eagle, Pliny, *H. N.*, x, 3; Aristotle, ix, 22; we saw great flocks of them all through Syria. We counted fifty-seven near Khan-Youb-Youseph, above the Lake of Genesareth, where a horse, abandoned by a caravan, lay dead in the midst of gigantic fennels.

ing their Messiah in the desert or in obscure retreats, thinking that He is planning there the restoration of His country, the true Messiah shall appear before the entire world with the overwhelming rapidity of the lightning; He shall trace His lightsome path from the East to the West, from Palestine He shall burst upon the Roman world, and generous souls attracted by this sudden manifestation shall hasten in crowds to His side to constitute His people or His Church. Such, in truth, has been the history of the great Christian revolution. Thus was accomplished the Parousia, or the inauguration of the reign of the Son of Man over mankind.

In figured terms, as is fitting in prophecy, Jesus continues this imposing picture of His coming as King among mankind in general and into each one of His members in particular.[37]

"And immediately after the tribulation of those days," He says, "there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon and in the stars; the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven. And upon the earth distress of nations by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves; men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world. For the pow-

[37] Those who wish to understand the following passages as concerning the last judgment do not suppress the difficulties created by these figures; they multiply them. First of all they must explain this word which opens for them the scene of the final catastrophe; εὐθέως, *immediately*, and which is scarcely suited to mark the long interval separating the destruction of Jerusalem from the general judgment. The different reading in *St. Mark*, *in those days*, and, *after that tribulation*, indicates likewise a very close relation of time between what precedes and what follows; and Jesus in declaring that the present generation shall see what He announces, irrevocably shuts the door on every explanation, tending to accept this passage as referring to the end of time. The figures here given of *stars that fall*, shall never be realised literally, no more at the end of the world than now. They are only symbols, and we must not trouble ourselves about the utility, or, better, the possibility of all the details they imply.

ers of heaven shall be moved. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." Aggeus had long before foretold this intermediary coming of the Christ into the world under the figure of universal perturbation. He represented Jehovah as saying: "Yet one little while, and I will move the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land.[38] It is perhaps this same promise, in its figurative form, that Jesus develops here. The other details which He adds are all in the style of the prophets.[39] It is easy to understand their meaning. Israel shall see the heavens obscured and darkness surrounding him on every side. His sons, who still survive the ruin of their country, in despair at such a catastrophe, shall wander through the world exposed to the caprice of nations as a disabled ship is abandoned to the caprice of the waves; they shall send forth awful groanings, and, stupefied, shall see be-

[38] Aggeus, ii, 6, 7.

[39] Thus Isaias, speaking of the woes that are to come upon Babylon (xiii, 9, and fol.), and of the inexorable wrath of Jehovah, prophesied the darkening of the heavenly bodies. He shows the sun advancing surrounded with darkness, and the moon having lost her brightness, while the heavens tremble to their depths, and the earth is shaken to its foundations. The picture he paints of the judgments of Jehovah upon the Edomites (xxxiv, 4) and other peoples, enemies of Israel, also contains the fading away of the host of the heavens, the falling of the heavenly bodies, "as the leaf falleth from the vine and from the fig-tree." Ezechiel (xxxii, 7, 8), also announces the judgment of God upon Egypt under the emblem of a general eclipse of the heavens; and Jeremias (iv, 23), employing the same figure to mark the woes that threaten Israel, sees, too, the mountains trembling and the hills quaking. Joel (ii, 3, 4), also, knows this language, and he threatens the enemies of Israel with signs in the sky and on earth; he prophesies blood, fire, smoke, the darkening of the heavenly bodies, and the shaking of the world by the cry which Jehovah shall send forth from Sion. Certainly no one can have the idea of discovering in these prophecies any other sense than a figurative sense. Just as the prophets sought to point out with these figures the fall of the most powerful and proudest empires and peoples, so Jesus indicates here the definitive destruction of Judaism, or, if it be preferred, of all the ancient religions.

ginning the triumph of Him Whom they had disowned; or, if one prefers to hear the sombre prophecy of the transformation of the ancient world, the falling of the stars and all the mournful heavenly phenomena shall symbolise the fall of Satan, the god of paganism multiplied under so many forms; while the earthly disturbances shall mark more particularly the violent crisis, the woful astonishment that shall seize upon mankind at the moment of his religious renovation. However that may be, it is after the most terrible storm that Jews and pagans shall see the sign of the Messiah resplendent in the sky. This sign shall be nothing else than His very power, or His Cross.[40] Behind it shall appear Christ the King.

The inauguration of His royalty over the world shall be solemn. "And He shall send the angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them." Thus shall be established God's new people by the voice of evangelic heralds who shall go through all the universe to awake and to gather into one society the souls worthy of hearing and capable of cherishing the good tidings. Such shall be the visible though wholly spiritual fulfilment of the coming of the Son of Man which for so long a time has engaged the thoughts of the disciples.

How long must they wait? "When you shall see these things (this social upheaval which I prophesy) begin to come to pass, look up and raise up your heads, because your redemption is at hand." It is natural for those who have

[40] The spiritual and glorious coming of Jesus into the world coincided, in fact, with the ruin of Judaism. It had begun, of course, with the Apostles; but they, being few in number, had been able only to hurry over the world, scattering the seed which was to rise only after them. Christianity, though preached throughout the whole world before the death of St. Paul, was solidly established only after the fall of the Jewish state.

long groaned beneath the yoke of persecution and in woe to lift up their head in token of deliverance and of thanksgiving. This the Church will do when, issuing from the laborious period of birth, she is strong enough to brave the hatred of her enemies. That time shall not be long in coming. "See the fig-tree," the Master goes on; "when the branch thereof is now tender and the leaves come forth, you know that summer is nigh. So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the kingdom of God is at hand." The sap that enlivens the tree, under the first influence of heat, announces the early approach of summer; God's justice stirring the nations shall proclaim the coming of His Kingdom.

If the disciples' curiosity is not yet satisfied, and if it demands a more exact date, Jesus will give it, as well as it can be given for an event in the moral order in which man's liberty has its part and always leaves room for the unexpected. "Amen I say to you, this generation shall not pass away until all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." It is, then, the present generation that shall see the Messianic reign established in the whole world.

With regard to its full development in eternity by the assembly of all the predestined, that is, with regard to the kingdom completed by the admission of all the subjects who are to constitute it in the course of the ages and to perfect the number of the elect determined by God, to what time must they be referred? This is more difficult to say.[41] "But of that day or hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but

[41] This distinction between the inauguration and the crowning of the Messianic reign seems to remove all the difficulties that had become in this passage and in the remainder of the discourse, a stumbling-block to interpreters.

the Father alone." The perspicacity of the angel, or even of the Son of Man, unaided by the divine knowledge, cannot foresee the hour when God's work on earth shall be finished. Long ages shall roll away, no doubt, for small shall always be the number of those who shall profit by the Good Tidings to insure their salvation, and great is the space reserved for man in the heavenly fatherland. Some, blinded by their carnal passions, others, victims of their indolence or of their presumption, will let God's gift pass on without profiting by it, and so will delay the hour of the definitive and complete reign of the Son of Man. This Jesus makes clear in the succession of spiritual warnings which He now addresses to His disciples.

"And as in the days of Noe, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, even until that day in which Noe entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be." [42]

As a matter of fact, the definitive coming of the Messianic Kingdom is being accomplished gradually every day for the great number of men whom death, like the deluge of old, seizes and hurls into eternity. How many of them foresaw this catastrophe? Their only care is to give themselves up to all their passions, and in reality they are not many who enter into the ark, the figure of the heavenly Kingdom. Yet the final number of the citizens who are to constitute this Kingdom has been none the less determined. The world shall endure until that

[42] St. Luke in his fragments (xvii, 26) adds to this example of the time of Noe, that of the fellow-citizens of Lot. "Likewise as it came to pass in the days of Lot. They did eat and drink; they bought and sold; they planted and built; and in the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all."

number is attained. As for the final result, which is the glorification of Jesus, this is in every way assured. The individual result, on the contrary, must vary according to the dispositions and above all the vigilance of each one.

Nothing could be more terrifying than the pitiless and apparently blind rapidity with which God's justice will come to test His own. "Then two shall be in the field, one shall be taken and one shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill;[43] one shall be taken, and one shall be left.[44] Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not at what hour your Lord will come." This thought of the vigilance necessary for whoever wished to be saved possesses the Master so deeply that He turns it about in all its aspects by multiplying figures and similitudes. And indeed it must be acknowledged that this was the immediately practical side of the question. In recommending to them such personal dispositions, He meant to prepare them for an event which they were to witness with their own eyes, and which consequently could be neither the end of the world nor the general judgment, but, in truth, death, seizing upon each man at his appointed hour to cast him at the feet of his Judge and to decide his eternity.

[43] These domestic hand-mills of which we have given a description and even a picture more than once (cf. *Notre Voyage aux Pays Bibliques*, vol. I, p. 295, and *Les Enfants de Nazareth*, p. 77) consist even to-day, as formerly, of two round stones placed one upon the other horizontally. The lower stone is immovable, the upper is moved by two women seated face to face. With the right hand, by means of an iron handle set upright in the stone, they move it continually to and fro and thus reduce to flour the grain which with the left hand they pour into an opening in the centre. Generally two women are required for this work. St. Luke reproduces this thought also in his fragments, adding to this picture that of two persons sharing the same bed; one is taken and the other left.

[44] If this passage had to be understood as referring to the general judgment, it would be difficult to understand how one of two is taken and the other left. All shall be taken at the same time. It is by death in the course of the ages that the individual surprises spoken of here are effected.

"Take heed to yourselves," the Saviour says, according to St. Luke, "lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth." This snare that falls upon the birds eating in the fields is, indeed, the snare of death. Woe to the men who, bowed down to earth, absorbed in sensuality, are devouring their joys too eagerly to see the snare as it advances; they shall be taken in misery, and shall perish in the midst of that vile pasturage to which they had become so attached. "Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of Man." Awaiting the great event that shall fix the eternal lot of each one, the soul must pray in order that it may be fortified. For it is a terrible thing to be obliged to look upon the Sovereign Judge in His glory, His power, and His justice.

"Take ye heed, watch and pray," says the Master[45] again, "for ye know not when the time is. Even as a man who going into a far country, left his house, and gave authority to his servants over every work, and commanded the porter to watch." Our soul is the house that belongs to Jesus, the Master Who departs for a while, but Whom our death shall at once recall. The control of this soul has been intrusted to our liberty; all our duties have been dictated to our various faculties and the obligation of watching has been laid upon our heart. If this guardian of our moral life is not at all times on the look-out, he exposes himself to a painful surprise. "For you know not when the lord of the house cometh; at even or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morn-

[45] *St. Mark* xiii, 33.

ing." As the watch is kept only during the time of sleep, the parable fixes the Master's unexpected coming at the various hours of the night. It would seem, then, that man's life is, in reality, only a very brief night, a prelude to the great day of eternity, a time of dreams, of illusions, of sleep, of phantoms, after which comes the real life and the truth. At the four ages of this life, as at the four watches of the night, Jesus has the right to come, because the house is His, and to see if His servants are worthy of His affection or of His anger. Nothing can excuse the negligent, neither the weakness of infancy, nor the passions of youth, nor the affairs of maturity, nor the infirmities of old age. "What I say to you, I say to all: Watch!" exclaims the Saviour. And unmindful that the hour was already quite advanced, He set about proposing to them two parables that demonstrate the importance of His advice.

"Then shall the Kingdom of heaven," He says, "be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom." [46] In the East, marriages are always celebrated at night. Hence the torches which we see invariably figuring in the descriptions of these joyous ceremonies. In Palestine, lamps [47] were more ordinarily used, oil being more common than resin. The celebration was carried on almost as follows: The bridegroom, accompanied by his friends, proceeded to the house of the young woman who was crowned (*callah*). He found her there in the midst of her family and her friends, dressed in her best attire, with flowers upon her

[46] The Latin text and the Syriac version recently discovered at Sinai, add: "*And the bride.*" This reading is not in the Greek manuscripts, but there is nothing in the application of the parable to prevent us from adopting it.

[47] These lamps themselves bear a great resemblance to torches. They consist of hollow sticks on the end of which is placed a vessel full of oil with a rag covered with pitch.

head, and awaiting the solemn hour. He officially demanded her from her father. After having received her, he led her away amid the benedictions of all her people and followed by a joyous and triumphant train, to his own house, or, if this dwelling seemed insufficient, to a hall prepared elsewhere for the nuptial banquet. During this time several young girls held themselves in readiness to receive the procession and to introduce the bride into her new habitation.

The number ten which the parable here gives is not taken at haphazard. In the Jewish idea it constitutes a complete society.[48] We may therefore see in this the whole number of the faithful who are invited to do honour to the divine Bridegroom, Who came upon earth to take His bride and to lead her into the banquet of heaven.[49] The lamps borne by the virgins are the emblem of faith, necessary that one may be a Christian. But, though having the same faith, the members of the Church have not the same wisdom. "Five of them were foolish, and five wise." So, even among the believers, scarcely half busy themselves seriously about achieving their salvation. The rest believe, but do not practice.

"But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with the lamps." To have torches without oil is to have

[48] Ten guests were enough to eat the Paschal lamb; ten constituted a church (*Kahal*), an assembly.

[49] It must be admitted that there is a difficulty here, and it is this difficulty which, leading one to conclude that, contrary to all custom, the nuptial ceremony had ended at the house of the bride, seems to have occasioned the suppression in the Greek manuscripts of the word *bride*, as we observed above. The faithful, represented by the virgins, are at the same time the Church symbolised in the bride. But we can understand how each one, since the parable was addressed to individuals, must consider himself as in a state of probation, uncertain whether or not he shall be admitted to become a part of the Church triumphant, even after having been of the Church militant.

faith without works. In that case, according to St. James, it is a *dead faith*, incapable of shining in the eyes of all. The vessels that contain the oil are the human soul that bears the merit of good works, or the conscience that preserves the memory of them.

"The bridegroom tarrying, they all slumbered and slept." If the bridegroom came without delay, in the days of adolescence, for instance, when all is still pure, or after repentance following a remarkable conversion, the oil would not be wanting in the lamp. But frequently Jesus delays His coming, and the merits of the faithful who have no energy, no stability, vanish imperceptibly. A torpor comes over these improvident souls. Spending all they have and acquiring nothing new, they insure for themselves the saddest kind of awakening. Foolish and wise, all the virgins fell asleep, as do all Christians, without distinction, in the sleep of death.

"At midnight a cry was heard: Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him." Great was their surprise. After their protracted wait, they were now no longer on the watch. "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." Unfortunately the oil had been entirely consumed, and this mischance threatened to be a serious one. It was not so, however, for all of them. Of the ten young girls, five, the wise ones, were not troubled long. They had put aside a sufficient quantity of oil so that they might not be taken unawares. The other five, on the contrary, who indeed merit the title of fools, immediately perceived their own imprudence and all its sad consequences. "Give us of your oil," they said to the wise virgins, their companions, "for our lamps are gone out." Thus, at the moment when the angel's voice shall announce the approach of the Son of Man, while the just shall have speedily made up in their consciences the sum

of their merits, the sinners, in fright, since they bear in their hands, under the guise of virtue, only useless or culpable works, will ask aid of the saints and will seek to profit by their great credit. The latter, all trembling as they behold the great Judge approach, shall find that their own charities, penances, and sacrifices are not any too numerous to insure their own eternity.

The prudent virgins replied: "Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and for you, go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." This is merely an ornament in the parable. Merit, being personal, is neither borrowed nor bought, especially if, through the absence of charity in the heart, one is not worthy of participating in the merits of Jesus Christ and of His most venerable members. What the Master means to say is that after death each one retains only his own works.

"Now while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage and the door was shut." The bridegroom, who had made them wait for him, waits not himself. He enters with all his faithful, watchful friends into the banquet hall. The poor foolish ones, after having run to repair their fault, return in all haste; but they are too late, the procession has passed, the bridegroom has gone in and the door is closed. The joyous songs, the odours of the feast reach them, as if to increase their regrets. To find one's self so near the banquet and yet to be condemned to remain so far away! They had been invited so cordially, and one moment's negligence has sufficed to exclude them! Perhaps their despair may excite some pity! They knock on the door, and hazard this supplication: "Lord, Lord, open to us!" The bridegroom answers: "Amen I say to you, I know you not." So it is; intimate friends a moment ago, unknown and rejected now,

the imprudent virgins shall have vainly held their torches in their hands during the first and the second hour; they should have been strong enough to maintain them unto the end. One moment's imprudence has compromised their eternity. It is vain for them to cry out at the door that there was but a slight interruption in their vigilance. That interruption is more than was required for their condemnation. The bridegroom passed at that moment; death cried out: "Behold the Son of Man!" They were not ready to accompany Him; all is ended, and ended for eternity. The door is shut. They who are within the banquet-hall go forth no more, and in this is their eternal consolation; they who are not within shall never enter, and in this lies the cause of their eternal despair.

This parable, so perfect as a whole and so minute in detail, seems to have had as its special object the keeping of the interior life aroused in souls. Immediately after it Jesus proposed another parable to define the conditions of exterior activity, which is equally the duty of every Christian. If the parable of the virgins seems to be the setting forth of the contemplative life, we may see in that of the talents the history of souls devoted to the active life. In the first it is the necessity of watching; in the other, that of acting. However, since the oil in all probability represented good works, one does not well see how the two similitudes differ in any notable manner. It is the same idea presented under different forms.[50]

[50] The main idea of the parable of the talents is already known to us. We find it all in the parable of the pounds. Nevertheless, special developments betray in each a different object. Here it treats of the lord of a house, while in the other it was a prince that was mentioned. The former, therefore, shall have relations only with his servants; the latter with his ministers and also with his rebellious subjects. Besides the number of servants, given as ten by St. Luke, and undetermined by St. Matthew, there are other notable differences in the result. Since the parable in St. Luke refers to the coming of the Son of Man in the present life and in the history of mankind,

The history of the Kingdom of heaven, Jesus says, is like that of a man who, "going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to every one according to his proper ability." In the same manner the Son of Man distributes His graces diversely to His faithful. In the divine plan, the souls have not all either the same vocation nor the same needs, and missions are various in the Church, because the harmony of the body must be sought from the variety of functions in the members. This inequality can wound no one. He who has received more must work more; he has, together with his more difficult labour, only a greater responsibility. He who has received less shall answer for less. He should not, then, be either jealous of the mission of others or humiliated by his own. In his more modest sphere every faculty is afforded him for doubling his assets and for obtaining the same reward as they who were better favoured. What more does he need?

"And immediately he took his journey, and he that had received the five talents went his way and traded with the same, and gained other five. And in like manner he that had received the two gained other two." This is the history of energetic souls who, losing not an instant, set themselves to work to develop their virtues by bringing forth fruit from the divine seed of which they are the depositaries. And then follows that of lax and

we perceive beneath the figured form, the apostolic jurisdiction distributed according to various merits, the ruin of Jerusalem announced, and the massacre of the rebels foretold. The present narrative speaks only of the coming of the Son of Man at our death. The eternal reward only is at stake. However, as there is a difference in the capital intrusted by the prince: a pound to each one, and that intrusted by the lord of the house: five talents to one, two to another, one to a third, so there is a difference in the reward. Those who have made the pounds bear fruit, receive unequal salaries, because they have done unequal works. They who have made the talents bear fruit, receive equal salaries, because they have expended equal energy.

lazy Christians. "But he that had received the one, going his way digged into the earth, and hid his lord's money." How many souls marked with the sign of Jesus Christ no longer trouble themselves about their dignity or their duties! As they have been called to edify others and to be saved only by the practice of ordinary virtues, they forget themselves in the preoccupations of material life and in worldly amusements. Their talents shall lie dormant, buried in the mire.

"But after a long time, the lord of these servants came." He had given all of them time to prove their intelligent activity or their carelessness. He now "reckoned with them." With this reckoning human life ends, and none can escape. He who had received five talents came and presented five more, saying: "Lord, thou didst deliver to me five talents, behold I have gained other five over and above." And his master replied: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord." He who had received two talents presented himself in his turn, and said: "Lord, thou didst deliver two talents to me; behold I have gained other two." And the master again said: "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

The haste with which these two servants came to render their accounts is explained by the very joy they felt for having worked so well and succeeded so happily in their ventures. Death has no terrors for the faithful disciples. They welcome it with faith as the evening of a painful, laborious day, as the coming of the Master Who is going to reward them, and the consoling hour when, giving in

their accounts, they shall prove their merit. It is with legitimate satisfaction that they bear in their hands the fruits of their endeavours: works of piety, devotion, justice; vices overcome, graces cultivated, moral beauty attained, good examples multiplied, brothers' souls led back to duty. But, with perfect humility, they acknowledge that all this, coming in the beginning from the Master's pleasure, belongs to the Master; for, though they have given their efforts, the Master furnished the capital that has fructified. And so they mean to keep nothing for themselves, and, faithful servants to the end, they restore the whole to their Lord's hands, deeming their endeavours sufficiently rewarded by the joy they have in manifesting to Him their acknowledgment and their attachment. But the Master cannot be surpassed in generosity. He will not spare his praises for such devoted men, and in these first words: "Well done!" that fall from His divine lips, there is a reward great enough to overshadow the rude trials of a whole life. God, perfect sanctity, incorruptible justice, infinite knowledge, saying to man: "Well done!" There is no applause on earth that can give any idea of the suavity of such sublime approbation. And yet there is consolation in the reward which man finds in the legitimate praises of his fellows. But praise is not enough to recompense virtue. It is a decree that the Master will promulgate; He will thus give an official sanction to the expression of His acknowledgment. The servant shall be made a prince; he has happily cultivated his little plot; he shall govern a country. Immediately he is invited to enter into the joy of the Lord to take possession of his new dignity. Eternal felicity is the very life of God, and it is with this life that the servant finds himself associated to a degree that is enveloped in mystery, but which is sufficiently explained by faith to en-

courage our poor hearts. We believe without difficulty that the infinite joy of the Creator will suffice to satisfy the limited needs of the creature.

But there is a shadow in the picture. "He that had received the one talent, came and said: Lord, I know that thou art a hard man; thou reapest where thou hast not sown; and gatherest where thou hast not strewed." These insolent words savour of the irritation of the condemned man surprised in his crime by the judgment. He is guilty, and takes refuge in insult. After this emotion of anger he strives to excuse himself, but without success. "And being afraid, I went and hid thy talent in the earth: behold, here thou hast that which is thine." But what had he done with his time, his intelligence, his native energy? These, too, all belonged to the master, and yet they had borne him no fruit. If he really thought he was dealing with a hard, exacting man, that was another reason why he should work the harder to please him. By what right did he so judge him who had so kindly intrusted his money to him? Besides, this master had just proved his kindness to the other two servants, and no time could be worse chosen to accuse him of severity and selfishness. To be afraid of God is the worst injury one can do Him, if this fear stifles love. There was need not of fear but of love. "Wicked and slothful servant," the master exclaimed on hearing these words, "thou knewest that I reap where I sow not, and gather where I have not strewed: thou oughtest therefore to have committed my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received my own with usury." Such is the prosecution in clear terms. The servant has committed two crimes: he has been guilty of calumniating his master's kindness, and lazy in neglecting to make his money yield profit. Then follows his punishment: "Take ye,

therefore, the talent away from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents; for to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound; but from him that hath not, that also which he seemeth to have shall be taken away." It was for the master's interest to take away from the bad servant the little that had been uselessly confided to him, and to give it to him who had given the best proofs of energy, intelligence, and devotion. Therein is found the secret of the graces which God multiplies in the souls of the saints, and which He rarely bestows upon the indifferent. Therein, too, is found the reason for the gradation in glory which He will establish in heaven, giving to the elect the portion of the lost.

"And the unprofitable servant," the Master goes on, "cast ye out into the exterior darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Here again we behold the result of every life passed in forgetfulness of God. On the day of judgment, the indolent servant, like the foolish virgin, shall be excluded from the heavenly banquet.

In this manner the good and the bad shall be divided, according to their works, into two groups for all eternity. When the number of the elect shall be complete, as well as that of the lost; when the ages assigned for the life of this universe are passed, the King of Heaven, no longer summoning men one by one to render an account of their works, shall set about judging them all together in the great judgment of mankind. At that time His justice shall be pleased to confirm the individual judgments pronounced in the course of the ages. After which His Kingdom shall be full, definite, eternal. In brilliant colours Jesus sketches this last picture,[51] which serves as reply to the third question proposed by the disciples:

[51] *St. Matt.* xxv, 31–46, alone gives this.

When shall be the end of the world and the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom?

Grand and awful is the spectacle! "When the Son of man shall come in His majesty, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the seat of majesty." The brilliancy of this manifestation shall be lacking in nothing. Cloudless and unveiled, the glory of the Son of God shall be shown to all. The angels, like devoted servants, shall surround Him to fulfil His commands. And it is fitting that they should witness God's judgment of man, since man had been given them as a brother, inferior in nature, but not in destiny.

"And all the nations shall be gathered together before Him." The dead, shaking off the dust of the grave, shall group themselves in families, tribes, races, and the great tree of mankind shall be raised up again in its majestic integrity. Peoples civilised and barbarian, men from the north and from the south, from the east and from the west, representatives of the world in its infancy, in its maturity and in its decrepitude, all, without any exception, shall be there bowing beneath the sceptre of the great King. What is the power that shall thus assemble this vast flock? The same that created it in the succession of ages, and which with a sign shall bring it back to life. The world began with a judgment from God, in like manner shall it end. Of His own work the Creator had said of yore: "It is good!" Of ours He shall say at that time: "It is good and it is bad!" Stupefied, trembling and dumb with fright, mankind shall await its sentence.

"And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats." Nothing is easier to a shepherd than to discern the goat, an impure, proud, violent, stubborn animal, from the modest,

timid, pacific, obedient sheep.[52] It will be still easier to know the sinners and the just. On their brows they shall bear the traces of their crimes and of their virtues. In the expression of the wicked there shall be that lascivious flame which in former days cynically bespoke the impurity of their souls; on their lips the words of hatred, of blasphemy, of falsehood, which they loved to utter, and in their hands the stigmata of their criminal actions. Their vices shall ooze, so to speak, from all the pores of their bodies, and, like the vile goats, they shall spread around them the abominable odour of their profound unworthiness. The just, on the contrary, in the lustre of their souls, shall reveal through the transparent veil of pure bodies the peace of consciences free from remorse, the joy of truth loved and practised, the sentiment of divine love assured.

A sign from Him Who has all power to judge shall denote the moment for the separation. "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left." The final division shall be, therefore, not between the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, princes and subjects, friends and enemies, but between the good and the wicked. God's justice will grasp and divide those whom the closest bonds of fortune, of knowledge, of friendship, or even of blood held united. Standing between these two hosts, both trembling at the gesture of His awful hand, the King shall speak. Looking first towards the right with a smile of unspeakable gentleness, He will say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Sweet words, far different from those

[52] It may be that this picture was inspired by *Ezechiel* xxxiv, 17, *et seq.* where the sheep represent the poor and humble, while the goats are a figure of the wicked and oppressors.

others for which, however, they shall be the happy recompense: "Go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor; take up thy cross and follow Me; I sent you (into the world) as sheep in the midst of wolves." How good it will be for the faithful servants to hear themselves proclaimed the blessed of the Father, and to find that at the close of their efforts they have fulfilled in them the plans of divine mercy. For they shall be, as it were, the foreseen and awaited conclusion of the premises laid down by the Creator in the beginning. It was in reality a heavenly society achieving, in its liberty and through the trials of life, the conquest of eternal felicity, that He desired to establish. To be perfect, this society must attain a certain development. It is when all the places in heaven shall be won that the history of mankind shall be finished on earth. Time shall end with it, and each one shall go to enjoy in eternity the beatitude that God has prepared for all without distinction, but which the elect only shall have succeeded in winning. The divine prescience shall have done no violence to the free will of any, leaving grace to aid the impotence of all.[53] "I was hungry," the Son of Man will say, "and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you covered Me; sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me."

Above all, the just have been kind, and in return God shows Himself kind to them. To tell the truth, they were not aware of the whole influence of their kind deeds, but their merit was not the less for that. Astonished to see

[53] The reason that God gives here for His benevolence towards the just cannot mean that works of charity are sufficient, in general, to insure salvation. According to the text itself, these works must be done for God's sake, and, consequently must be inspired by faith, as their vital principle. The entire Evangelical doctrine on these things is, in fact, summed up in these two words: to have life, faith and works must go together.

themselves thus highly praised, since the immense majority of them shall not have seen Jesus Christ living upon earth, and consequently shall not have been able to do Him the kind offices enumerated, the just will cry out with innocent and modest simplicity: "Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee; thirsty, and gave Thee drink; and when did we see Thee a stranger, and take Thee in; or naked, and covered Thee; or when did we see Thee sick or in prison, and came to Thee?" And the King, replying, will say to them: "Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, My least brethren, you did it to Me." [54] What is the secret of this mysterious union, of this solidarity so unexpected? The organism of the Christian Church is like the organism of the human body. The grief and the solace which we experience, even in the least noble parts of the body, communicate directly with the brain. The good or the evil done to a member of the Christian society goes straight to the head of that society, Who is Jesus Christ. For, He the Master, lives even in the smallest of His servants whom He deigns to call His brothers. In reality these disciples, humble and poor, bear His livery and even His moral resemblance. To love and to succour them is to love and succour Himself. To scorn them is to scorn the King and to provoke the Judge's wrath.

Turning, then, with a gaze full of rebuke upon the dejected multitude trembling on His left, He will bid them in terrible tones: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his

[4] Although there is but one virtue praised here, the doing of good to the unfortunate, we must not conclude that Jesus appreciates only that one, and that He will leave all the others unrewarded. Among all meritorious works He takes one for an example, and sets it forth in prominence. If He chose charity, it is because this was to be the distinctive character of the nascent Church, in the midst of selfish and unsympathetic paganism.

angels." Every word of this awful sentence means a torture. Far from Jesus, far from life, far from God, what an exile! Beneath the most pitiless stroke and the most overwhelming malediction, abandoned to their own unworthiness, what a moral torment! In fire material or spiritual,[55] what a garment, what a dwelling! And all this most desperate prospect shall be for eternity, in the company of Satan and his ministers. But the wicked shall have merited it, for they will have had the sad courage of never having been kind themselves to any one. "For I was hungry," Jesus will say, "and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me not in; naked, and you covered Me not; sick and in prison, and you did not visit Me." The lost, in astonishment at such words, will cry out in vain: "Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?" Their objection shall have a quick response: "Amen I say to you," the Master will reply, "as long as you did not this to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me." Like the just, the wicked did not foresee the far-reaching efficacy of their works in eternity. Neither knew that there is, according to the beautiful thought of a Father of the Church, only one poor man, Jesus Christ, stretching out His hand through all the unfortunate mendicants of earth. As one always gains more than he expects in doing good, so he loses more than he suspects in doing evil. As delightful as shall be the surprise of the charitable on learning this

[55] Whether the soul of the damned communicates to the body the fever of suffering like a devouring fire, or whether creatures take their revenge on the body that has so often turned them from their end and defiled them, by exacting expiation in real fire, the suffering will always be terrible, since in either case it will devour the physical organism without ever consuming it.

strange mystery, so painful shall be the surprise of the selfish and unfeeling.

"And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting."

So shall end the world. So shall begin the universal reign of Jesus Christ over the rebellious in their chastisement, who in their sufferings will proclaim His justice, and over the faithful in their reward who, in their felicity, will extol His mercies.

Between these two extremes in eternity will yawn an impassable abyss. The Angel of God will proclaim that all is ended. All shall, indeed, be ended for all, but not in the same manner.

The disciples who had listened to this awful revelation of the future were silent and sad. With this access of most poignant emotion this great and final day came to its close.

CHAPTER XI

FINAL RESULT OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Israel Incapable of Understanding—An Objection and its Answer—Israel's Deserved Rejection. (St. John xii, 36–50.)

The public ministry of our Saviour was over. Nothing could be more disappointing than its results. St. John pictures Jesus quitting the Temple, almost like a condemned man who hides [1] himself to escape the hands of his enemies; and the Synoptics, to complete the picture, have given us the final anathema which He pronounced against the Jewish people as He departed out of the Holy City.

It was true, then, that after having waited so many centuries, Israel, ignoring the fulfilment of all the prophecies, in spite of all the other heavenly signs, ruthlessly rejected the Messiah. However, the Master had been lacking in nothing that would attract the sympathy of His people to Him, neither holiness of life, nor sublimity of doctrine, nor the power to achieve the greatest prodigies. His lips had opened in mildness and in severity, in tones of tenderest love and, at times, of justice in holy indignation. With His divine logic and incomparable purity, He had crushed all His enemies. What, then, was needed to make Him acceptable to His own? Doubtless, that He should place Himself on their moral level.

[1] *St. John* xii, 36.

Israel, who was of the earth earthy, thought only of an earthly Messiah. It was a political revolution he desired, and not a religious transformation. That which referred to the soul alone scarcely appealed to him at all. Having set his Messianic ideal in the appearance of a conquering monarch, who should reign over the entire universe, he was incapable of acknowledging Him in the peaceful founder of a new religion; the more so since this religion, universal like truth—here was the stumbling-block—was to be for the whole world. The Jewish people, in its egotism, looked only for a Saviour exclusively Jewish. A Messiah who was more a humanitarian than a patriot, bringing to His people only the goods of an invisible and wholly spiritual order, could not be the Messiah; such was the reasoning that prevailed in Jerusalem.

Before such prejudices, the works, the words, the omnipotence, the sanctity of Jesus were nothing and proved nothing. Thus it was that all hastened on towards the fatal *dénouement*; Israel rejecting his Christ shall himself be rejected; he does Him to death, and he himself shall be exterminated.

But is there not in this a source of scandal to human reason? The people that was to find its rehabilitation in the Messiah, finds in Him its ruin! It was destined officially to present Him to the world, and has itself disowned Him! Is not God's wisdom wanting somewhere? The first generation of Christians asked all these questions. St. Paul treats of them in his Epistle to the Romans,[2] and St. John, having come to the end of the public life of Jesus, takes care to give us the answer.

First of all, we must not suppose that this obstinacy on the part of the Jewish people was a surprise at the last moment. God had foreseen it as He foresees everything

[2] *Rom.* ix.–x.

in the history of the world, and His prophets had foretold it. Side by side with the oracles that represent Israel rejoicing in the light of his Messiah, is also the sad perspective of an Israel obstinate, accursed, and supplanted by a new people. We must not lose sight of this, for here is found the solution of the first difficulty.

"Whereas He had done so many miracles [3] before them, they believed not in Him," says St. John, "that the saying of Isaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said: Lord, who hath believed our hearing; and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?" [4] At the very moment when he announces the Messiah's future humiliations, the prophet, in astonishment, wonders who will believe His words and who will recognise, in the heavenly messenger covered with opprobrium, the all-powerful arm of the Lord. Certainly not the majority, for to accept such a mystery a robust faith and a lofty soul are needed. But the Jews have not merited the preservation of this penetrating glance of the heart that enables one to see through the shadows. "Therefore they could not believe," says the Evangelist,[5] "because Isaias said again: He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."

[3] The Evangelist in speaking thus—τοσαῦτα in St. John refers to the number rather than to the greatness of the miracles, *comp.* vi, 9; xxi, 11—proves that he did not limit the thaumaturgical achievements of Jesus to the six prodigies which he recounts. *Comp.* vii, 3; xx, 30.

[4] *Isaias* liii, 1.

[5] St. John quotes from memory without care for verbal exactitude. He follows neither the Hebrew text, nor the Septuagint, yet he preserves the exact meaning of the prophet. (See *Is.* vi, 9–10.) In the Hebrew, it is Isaias who is to blind and harden this people. Evidently the prophet means that God's power will accomplish this punishment through him, and St. John agrees with him in saying that God has blinded and hardened Israel. In the Septuagint it is the people that hardens its own heart.

Such, then, is the moral fact clearly established. Israel loses his merit in God's sight; God withdraws the light from him, and he no longer sees. All this was foreseen and can astonish only those for whom the meaning of the Scriptures is unexplained. Hence God's wisdom is not at fault. It has reckoned with what has happened, and the very malice of the Jews has aided in the realisation of Its counsels.

Both the punishment deserved by the faithless people and the punishment which it actually receives figure in the divine plan. Thus, although he fails to see the light that is before him, Israel shall become, nevertheless, the torch-bearer illumining from age to age the heavenly countenance of the Messiah, and his own blindness foretold by the prophets shall be a striking proof of the divine mission of Jesus.

There is more than one way of doing homage to the Son of Man. The demons, by their tortures and their hate, proclaim the sanctity of God. Israel obstinate, accursed, destroyed, shall say in spite of himself that Jesus was more than man. If that gentle Victim Whom he slew were merely a just man, he would not have suffered a punishment so terrible and so long. It was the blood of a God that reddened his hands, and that is why nothing can efface it. The unfortunate nation blasphemes still, but the brand of the deicide, stamped upon its brow, does homage none the less to the superhuman character of Him Whom it insults.

What would have happened if Israel, preserving all the exclusivist notions and national prejudices of the past, had accepted the Gospel as a whole? Could the Gospel have succeeded in escaping the controlling hand of the Synagogue? What would have been the fate of the Gentiles? Would the right to go and preach the Gospel to them

ever have been granted? Is not the effort that it cost Paul and the rest in order to enforce the universality of the Christian dispensation in opposition to a few Jews who, however, had become followers of the Gospel, a proof of the fatal obstacle which Israel, converted, would have raised up against the spread of the new religion? And if, which were impossible, the Synagogue had permitted the evangelisation of the world, would it not have laid down as a condition for the admission of pagans in its Judeo-Christian Church, the practice of Mosaic observances, to which these latter would have persistently refused to submit? On examining, one by one, all the sides of this question, we are led to the conclusion drawn by St. Paul: Israel was rejected because of his offenses, but his offenses have become the riches of the world, and his rejection has resulted in the salvation of mankind.[6]

"These things said Isaias when he saw His glory [7] and spoke of Him," St. John adds. Hence, it is impossible for the fulfilment of such a prophecy to diminish or to retard Jesus' triumph.

Besides, all Israel has not rejected the Messiah, and the Evangelist is pleased to acknowledge that, even among the chiefs of the people, many had believed in Him. To be sure, "because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, that they might not be cast out of the Synagogue. For they loved the glory of men, more than the glory of God"; but, in reality, the spark was kindled in their soul and was capable, when the hour should come, of inflaming the world.

In fact, these faint-hearted, hesitating men, who had

[6] *Romans* xi, 11–15.

[7] Since in this chapter vi, Isaias contemplates the glory of Jehovah, we are right in concluding that here, as St. Paul does elsewhere (*Phil.* ii, 6; I *Cor.* x, 4), St. John identifies Jehovah with Jesus, and so clearly declares the divinity of the Messiah.

acknowledged interiorly the divine mission of Jesus, stood up, after Pentecost, bold and brave as lions; and tearing, so to speak, the yet bloody Cross from the hands of the executioners, they bore it through the whole world, repeating the words of the centurion: "Indeed, this man was the Son of God." The group which they formed, and which became the Church, was the true Israel of the divine promises. The others were the Israel of reprobation, and they had well merited it.

For nothing was wanting to render their crime inexcusable: neither malice, on their part, nor patient and predisposing kindness on God's. To put the proof of this before us, St. John here sums up the formal declarations which Jesus had made to them. For clearness and authority [8] they were complete. "But Jesus cried and said [9]: He that believeth in Me, doth not believe in Me, but in Him that sent Me. And he that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me." [10] For, as we have so frequently observed, Jesus had proved by His miracles that His cause was God's, and that He was in reality only one with His Father. Outside of Him, the Teacher sent by heaven to man, there was only darkness. A glance over the world was sufficient to prove this. In His words, the truth had shone with all its power of persuasion. "I am come a light into the world; that whosoever believeth in Me, may not remain in darkness." [11]

[8] This summing up by St. John of the testimony which Jesus gave of Himself during His ministry would be a bit of impudent boldness, were the fourth Gospel the work of an impostor.

[9] It is difficult to admit that St. John gives here a special discourse of our Lord's. Where did He deliver it? In the Temple? The Evangelist has just said that He had withdrawn altogether from public life. Was it to His Apostles? Why then this word ἔκραξεν? The simplest thing is to take this passage as a summing up of the principal declarations that should have dispelled the Jews' unbelief. All that is read in this fragment is only a repetition of former discourses, and it would be difficult to arrange it so as to find in it the sequence of a particular discourse.

[10] Comp. ch. v, 36; vi, 38; vii, 18; viii, 18, 28; x, 38.

[11] Comp. ch. iii, 19; viii, 12; ix, 5, 39.

Therefore, woe to him who obstinately refuses to acknowledge the divine Teacher, and closes his eyes to His glorious manifestation! Unbelievers have learned from His own lips the lot that awaits them: "If any man," He said, "hear My words and keep them not, I do not judge him; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that despiseth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.[12] This word is the Father's word. "For I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father, who sent Me, He gave Me commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father said unto Me, so do I speak." [13]

Notwithstanding all this, Israel has remained insensible, stubborn, hostile. In vain, if we may trust the prophecy of Isaias invoked by St. Paul, has God stretched forth His hands to him the whole day long, during the time of the ministry of His Son. He has provoked only his unbelief and his opposition. Weary of pursuing him, grace at last abandons him to his criminal instincts, and we are about to see him, in cold blood, become guilty of the most revolting ingratitude, the most odious crime, the most execrable sacrilege that can stain the memory of a people. So that the divine punishment, however terrible it may be, shall ever be unequal to the fault.

[12] Comp. ch. iii, 17; v, 24; viii, 15.
[13] Comp. ch. v, 30; vii, 18; viii, 16, 28, 29.

PART THIRD

THE END

BOOK I

The Death of the Messiah

Section I

The Lengthening of the Shadow

CHAPTER I

JUDAS AND THE SANHEDRIM

At the House of Caiphas—Jesus Determines the Date of His Death—The Motives of Judas—The Price to be Paid. (St. Matthew xxvi, 1–5 and 14–16; St. Mark xiv, 1 and 10–11; St. Luke xxii, 1–6.)

As we may easily suppose, the hierarchical party had been too severely denounced, on that day, to an indignant populace, not to feel the need of exacting a terrible revenge, and of putting a speedy end to an adversary who proved to be as pitiless as He was powerful.

At nightfall, the members of the Sanhedrim assembled in special[1] meeting in the house of Caiphas.[2] There,

[1] The ordinary meetings were held in daytime, in the Temple, in the place officially set apart for the Sanhedrim.

[2] Tradition says that it was his country house, situated to the south from Jerusalem, on the Mount of *Evil Counsel*, and not far from where it is believed that the tomb of Annas, Caiphas' father-in-law, was recently discovered. However, the text of *St. Matthew* xxvi, 3, says that they met *εἰς τὴν αὐλήν*, in the court, or in the palace of the high-priest. The word *αὐλή* signifies, in fact, the interior courtyard (*St. John* xviii, 15), and often the palace itself, as in *Athen. Deipn.*, vi; *Herodian*, 13, 16, Pindar and the tragic poets in general.

each one was enabled to set forth his grievances against the young Prophet, and the sum of their accusations raised their fury to a paroxysm.

In fact, they were visibly hurt by the rude blows they had just received. The Master had done justice to their ignorance, to their vices, to their pretensions, to their hypocrisy, each in turn. Without any contradictory discussion, they determined to reaffirm with the promise of an early execution the sentence of death passed upon Jesus two months before. But since the populace, and especially the Galileans, enthusiastic over their Messiah, were to be feared if any attempt should be made in public, they decided to have recourse to a ruse, and to look for a chance to seize Him quietly and unexpectedly when the people would not be present. This was responding, by a capital condemnation, to the sentence which Jesus had just pronounced that same hour against them and the whole nation. The two anathemas, issuing, one from the Mount of Olives, the other from the mountain either of Sion or of *Evil Counsel*, crossed each other thus above the unfortunate city, and were destined to produce the most terrible results. Both were freighted with death, but with this difference, that the iniquitous sentence of the Sanhedrim was not without appeal and had a glorious morrow, while the blow struck by divine justice was irreparable and final.

It was right, indeed, that, while allowing free action to the malice of men, God should remain Master, and modify at His pleasure man's criminal decisions. It was a remarkable coincidence that at the moment when the Sanhedrim declared that they must withhold themselves from laying hands on Jesus during the festival, in order to avoid tumult and scandal, the latter affirmed that He would be put to death on the very day on which His adversaries

did not desire it. Thus He Himself selected and enforced His hour upon His executioners. The latter could not, in fact, have any power over Him but that which He granted them.

Having terminated His solemn prophecy, Jesus had risen, and, leaving the western slope of the Mount of Olives had again taken the road to Bethany. The disciples surrounded Him, silent and mournful. This woful revelation of the future had dismayed them. He, Himself, occupied with the thought of His approaching death, said to them with a sigh: "Ye know that after two days [3] shall be the Pasch, and the Son of man shall be delivered up to be crucified." There was no response. These latest words were harder than all the rest, and the great day was closing beneath the weight of the bitterest emotion. Yet two days, and the Master will end His career upon a Cross. The Lamb, laden with the sins of the world will be immolated, and, the reality following the symbol, He will take the place of the Paschal lamb. Beyond the gibbet to which He will be nailed, Jesus has permitted them to see the Temple tumbling in ruins, the Holy City destroyed, the Jewish people exterminated. The prospect was terrifying. Nothing more was needed to disturb the disciples' minds, and they slept, no doubt, a troubled sleep.

Was it the sum of these latest communications, or the general impression of that day that had succeeded in detaching one of the Twelve from the Master? [4] We cannot say. It is certain, at least, that while the others were

[3] According to this chronological indication, the discourse on the end of the world was pronounced two days before the Crucifixion, and also two days before the celebration of the Passover. The date here given by St. Matthew (xxvi, 1, 2), and St. Mark (xiv, 1, 2), *μετὰ δύο ἡμέρας* seems to agree perfectly with St. John xviii, 28.

[4] Note the importance attached to this formula: *εἷς τῶν δώδεκα*, which is found in the three Synoptics, in *St. John* xii 4, and in the *Acts* i, 17. It reminds us bitterly of what Judas was and of what he should have been.

returning with Jesus to Bethany, Judas, gloomy and dark, his soul exercised with horrible thoughts, was wandering in the streets of the Holy City. After a long conflict, perhaps, he had just opened his heart to Satan.[5]

If, as we have said elsewhere, this wretched man had followed Jesus with none but ambitious views and in the hope of temporal reward, we understand how, on that evening, he must have experienced the keenest disappointment. He was certain now that His Master was not what he dreamed he was. Could He Who prophesied the ruin of Israel and His own death on a Cross, be really the Messiah? Madman or impostor, Jesus had deceived His followers, and there was nothing now to do but to break with Him, and abandon Him to the storm He had called down upon His own head. Through a vengeful sentiment quite natural to uncultivated souls when balked in their most ardent desires, Judas conceived the thought of delivering this false Messiah into the hands of His enemies. And as everything became mixed up in his heart with some material interest, he thought that if Jesus was no longer to be of any advantage to him during His life, He might, at least, be of some profit to him by His death. He therefore decided on a plan to sell Him at a great price. If he was forced to betray Him for little, it was because he was unable at the last moment to obtain more. Such, perhaps, is the explanation of his crime; it is the most natural and the best authorised by the Gospel story.

To say that Judas was simply in doubt, and not in a state of positive disbelief with regard to Jesus, is to look upon his first step in this crime in a less odious light.[6]

[5] *St. John* (xiii, 2) mentions this first victory of Satan over Judas at the same time as *St. Luke* (xxii). He will mention the second (xiii, 27), after which the wretched disciple will abandon his soul entirely to evil and to final despair.

[6] Neander in his *Life of Jesus*, vol. i; Whately, *Essays on Dangers to Christian Faith*, disc. iii; Strauss in his *Life of Jesus*, vol. ii, and Daub,

But the final result remains just as detestable as ever. Tired of hearing Jesus always announcing His Kingdom without ever inaugurating it, and no longer checking his eager ambition, the guilty disciple sought to hasten the end. From the moment when he saw the multitude in admiration before Jesus and the Galileans ready for an attack, he determined to give Him up to those who had decreed His death, in order to force Him to prove His omnipotence, or to betray His weakness. This audacious test was such that He could issue from it only as the triumphant Messiah, or as a chastised impostor. The end of a doubtful situation would therefore be seen, and all hesitation would be cut short. It is not unusual for man's foolish pride to pretend thus to hurry at will the advance of providential events, and to hasten God's hour in keeping with his own caprices.

In any case, with his faith compromised, his probity suspected, and the affront recently received at the banquet in Bethany, Judas must have found himself out of place in the Apostolic circle. Without any real affection for the Master, he was no longer bound to Him by anything more than a trace of false shame. The desire to see the group of the Twelve broken up or radically transformed beneath the blow of a violent catastrophe, tormented his soul. When ambition, doubt, offended pride, exercise one's brain, and when they have nothing but a heart full of selfishness to counterbalance them, anything is possible. Besides, it has always been observed in the Master's career that He fatally repels those whom His person fails to attract. Concerning Him no one can be indifferent. Judas, beginning, perhaps, with a mere doubt, reached at

Judas Iscarioth, Heidelberg, 1816; Lechtlen, *de culpa Judæ*, 1813; have summed up from various stand-points the diverse opinions concerning Judas and his crime.

once the extreme of unbelief and of malice. Even though he had been merely a bold revolutionary, in the first conception of his fearful project, it is certain that he ended as the vilest of criminals. The money he dared to ask and to receive stained his hands. It makes us forget other aims in themselves most criminal, though of a superior order, that might have deceived and led him on at first, and he stands for impartial history the most odious of assassins, and for the Christian Church the most infamous of apostates.

He turned, then, under the favour of night, towards the house of Caiphas. His heart, evil as it was, must have beat strong, when, knocking at the door, he asked to be introduced into the presence of his Master's enemies. The welcome they gave him encouraged him, no doubt, and before the great assembly that rejoiced in his plan,[7] he recovered all that cool energy that generally characterised him. His cynical impudence even yet revolts us: "What will you give me," he said, "and I will deliver Him unto you?" It was a rather daring speech to make to an organised body. But the wretch felt himself on the level of such judges, and he dealt with them without much show of respect. But the direct step he had just taken was an irreparable fault. Whatever the reply of the Sanhedrim might be, he had gone too far to turn back. The chief priests saw this clearly. Since Judas was irrevocably theirs, it was not worth while to show themselves generous towards him. They offered him thirty pieces of silver, or thirty shekels,[8] nearly nineteen dollars of our

[7] *St. Mark* xiv, 11, and *St. Luke* xxii, 5, ἀκούσαντες ἐχάρησαν.

[8] The sacred shekel—the Sanhedrim naturally paid with this money—was a piece of money introduced into Palestine after the Maccabees. It usually bore on one side a representation of a censer or of some vessel with this inscription: *Shekel of Israel*, and on the other an olive branch and three flowers with these words: *Jerusalem the Holy*. The shekel was worth about

money. This was the value commonly attributed to a slave.[9] Pharisaical pride deemed Jesus of no greater worth. It is not said that Judas insisted on receiving more.

The fact of having accepted so mean a recompense for so great a crime reveals the coarseness of these peasant natures, suddenly elevated to a vocation of which they were not worthy. Early education always withholds men of a certain class, however wicked and despicable they may seem, from descending so low.

Judas, disappointed, no doubt, but not humiliated at having obtained so little, left the assembly, giving his word that he would soon find a sure opportunity of delivering up the Master. As he took his way back to Bethany, across the valley of the Sons of Hinnon and the sombre gorges of the Cedron, he must have felt the need of pressing the price of his crime more than once against his heart, to trample on the remorse that rose within him. As St. Luke tells us, Satan had entered into him.

sixty-two cents. *St. Matthew* xxvi, 15, alone gives the price offered. The other two Synoptics say in a general way that they gave him silver, ἀργύριον. St. Matthew was certainly happy in finding in this figure the fulfilment of a prophecy, but there is no reason for believing that it was the prophecy that suggested the figure, and that perhaps Judas received much more. For a man of humble circumstances, and at that epoch, nineteen dollars was still a considerable sum.

[9] *Exod.* xxi, 32.

CHAPTER II

PREPARATIONS FOR THE PASSOVER

THURSDAY MORNING—THE ABSENCE FROM JERUSALEM—THE LAST SUPPER AND THE JEWISH PASSOVER—ST. JOHN AND THE SYNOPTICS. (St. Matthew xxvi, 17–19; St. Mark xiv, 12–16; St. Luke xxii, 7–13.)

WE know that among the members of the Sanhedrim Jesus counted several devoted followers. It is possible that these were not summoned with the others to Caiphas' house, but if, in spite of that, they were aware of the result of this special meeting and of Judas' criminal conduct, to bear this information to the Master was their first duty. But the latter had not to wait for their information. Before and better than any, He knew the traitor's malice, and His divine eye, unseen itself, followed his every step.

On Thursday morning, therefore, instead of returning to Jerusalem, He made known His intention of remaining in Bethany, or on the Mount of Olives, alone with God, His Father, in that devout spiritual contemplation that prepares for the sacrifice. The people, who were unaware of the mysterious iniquity accomplished during the night, vainly waited for Him in the Temple, unable to account for His absence. After the triumphs of the preceding days, they were far from suspecting that a catastrophe was imminent. And yet His enemies had so well prepared it, that it was no longer possible for Jesus to reappear in Jerusalem without at once provoking it. The

Victim will therefore hold Himself aloof for this day so that He shall be immolated only on the morrow, at the very hour of the great Paschal sacrifice, in accordance with the providential order and in beautiful harmony with the prophetical figures.

We possess none of the details of the last moments that Jesus passed in the midst of His friends, in that house in Bethany where He had experienced such holy joy. With what emotions His soul must have been stirred as He entered beneath that hospitable roof to sleep there, at the age of thirty-three, His last sleep on earth, with the clear prospect of going, after these few hours of rest, to endure the hard labour of His Passion.

As it was necessary to begin the preparations for the Paschal meal on the morning of the thirteenth of Nisan, the Apostles, seeing Jesus inattentive to this matter, said to Him: "Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Pasch?" This question, asked in the presence of all, was especially interesting to Judas. It may even be that it was he that provoked it, desirous of keeping his word to the Sanhedrim. If so, he must have been disagreeably surprised to find himself, first of all, supplanted in the office of steward, or purveyor to the Apostolic circle. For it is Peter and John that Jesus charged to make preparations for the Paschal meal. The traitor must not be suffered to do his work either before or during this supreme and fraternal reunion. And hence we see the Master taking precautions in His language that Judas may remain in ignorance even of the spot where it is to take place. Peter and John are assuredly faithful friends, their discretion is well known, and yet the name of the host who is to receive them shall not be confided to them. It is only when they are in Jerusalem that they shall know it. The rest of the Apostles shall remain ignorant of it.

"Go ye into the city," He replied to them, "and there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him, and whithersoever he shall go in say to the master of the house: The Master saith: My time is near at hand; where is my refectory where I may eat the Pasch with my disciples. And he will show you a large dining room furnished; and there prepare ye for us."[1]

As Jesus counts with certainty on this apartment, known in all the details of its furnishings, and of vast proportions, some have thought that He had engaged it beforehand, so as not to be in a difficulty at the last moment. Thus He has them ask not if there is a large apartment disengaged, but where it is. In any hypothesis, the proprietor must have been a faithful proselyte, for they speak to him of the Master and of His time as if he were accustomed to these expressions familiar to Jesus' intimates.

It is not, however, by previous agreement, as many have supposed, that the Apostles will encounter the servant at the gate of the city. Jesus gives His information after having appealed to His divine prescience.[2] At the moment when, in each family, water is being drawn to purify the houses for the Paschal feast, He beholds the servant of the host whom He has chosen going down towards the fountain of Siloe. If Peter and John set out without delay, they will meet him on the way at the gates of the city. They will have only to follow him. At his master's house the Paschal meal is to take place.

[1] St. Matthew, although he does not mention in his narration the man carrying the pitcher, conveys the exact idea, and clearly shows that Jesus did not wish to make known the name of the man at whose house He was to receive hospitality. "Go ye . . . to a certain man," he has the Saviour say: *πρὸς τὸν δεῖνα*. The other Synoptics, better than he, explain how He was able to designate the man without naming him.

[2] This is seen in the entire story as told by St. Mark and St. Luke. Thus Jesus had seen from afar that Lazarus was dead, that the son of the royal officer of Capharnaum was cured, etc.

Everything happened as Jesus had foretold it. While the rest of the Apostles and Judas himself, somewhat worried by the new attitude the Master had assumed towards him, remained in Bethany, Peter and John came to the city, found the banquet-hall, and were hastening to make everything ready. The preliminaries of the Paschal meal comprised the presentation of the Paschal lamb in the court of the Temple, where the head of the family had to assist the Levites in immolating it, the preparation of the unleavened bread, and finally the purchase of the bitter herbs. This was a great deal of work for the short time that remained before nightfall. But the two disciples willingly redoubled their efforts, proud of taking the Master's place on so solemn an occasion.

Their mission was not without its symbolic meaning. It has been thought with reason that they owed to their respective characters the honour of having been chosen to represent, Peter, the love that acts, and John, the love that contemplates, and to personify thus the two effective elements of all religious development in mankind. Was not Peter, moreover, the already appointed head of the new society? John had been assigned him as an auxiliary, to show that, in the course of the ages, the episcopate should have, by divine right, its official place beside the authorised representative of Jesus Christ, and should participate in his paternity, in his priesthood, and in his authority.

Here arises the difficult question, which, having divided the interpreters [3] of all times, will owe, perhaps, its best solution to the most recent criticism: did Jesus' last supper

[3] See Schürer, *De Controv. Paschalibus*, 1867; Robinson, *Harm. of the Gospels*, p. 212–223; Greswell, *Dissertationes*; Wieseler, *Chronol. Syn.*; Tischendorf, *Synop. Ev.*; Bleek, *Dissert. üb. den Monatstag des Todes Christi;* Kirchner, *Die Jüdische Passahfaier*, 1870; Godet, *Comment. sur Saint Jean*, vol. iii, pp. 405–625.

with His Apostles coincide with the Jewish Pasch, or did it precede it? Was it on the thirteenth or the fourteenth of Nisan that it took place? [4]

According to the Synoptics, it seems to have coincided with it. According to St. John, it preceded it.

For the Synoptics observe that Jesus commanded that the repast should be prepared *on the first day of the unleavened bread* (*of the Azymes*) *when they sacrificed the Pasch.*[5] Therefore the meal with which that same day was closed was the Paschal meal, falling on the fourteenth of Nisan. This can hardly be denied, since the Apostles had asked the Master *where they should prepare the Pasch which He was to eat*, and since, in fact, according to St. Matthew, *they did prepare the Pasch.*[6] Hence, that evening we see Jesus sitting at table with the Twelve, and beginning the sacred banquet with these words, preserved in St. Luke[7]: "*With desire have I desired to eat this pasch with you.*"

At the same time, as we shall see, we may be justified in finding in the story of the Last Supper some trace of the principal rites that characterised the Paschal meal. Thus, after the solemn benediction, the obligatory prelude of this symbolical banquet, the Master will have the first

[4] With regard to the day of the week, the four Gospels agree in saying that it was Thursday, and that Jesus was crucified on Friday. St. Matthew (xxvii, 62) indicates clearly that the burial of Jesus took place on the day of the Preparation or the παρασκευή, and St. Mark (xv, 42) confirms this when he explains, for the sake of his Roman readers, the meaning of the word παρασκευή, ὅ ἐστιν προσάββατον, that is, the eve of the Sabbath. St. Luke (xxiii, 54) in turn, observes that Jesus was laid in the tomb on the day of the Parasceve, at the hour when the Sabbath was about to begin. Finally, St. John (xix, 31) says that, as the crucifixion occurred on the eve of the Sabbath, they decided not to leave the bodies hanging on the crosses. The only difficulty, therefore, is to find out on what date of Nisan this Friday fell.

[5] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 17 and parallel passage.

[6] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 17 and 19, and parallel passages.

[7] *St. Luke* xxii, 15.

chalice of wine[8] passed around, and when the supper is ended, the customary chalice of benediction.[9] Thus, again, according to St. Mark and St. Matthew, He will chant, at the end, the hymn which was doubtless the last part of the great Hallel. Indeed, had we no other information than that of the Synoptics, we would have had to acknowledge, in spite of every difficulty, that Jesus ate the Pasch on the fourteenth of Nisan, after the sun had set, that He was crucified on the fifteenth, the first of the seven days of the Paschal week, which date fell that year on Friday, and that, having remained in the sepulchre the sixteenth, He rose again on Sunday, the seventeenth of the same month.

The most difficult of all would be to admit that, on the day of the Passover, which was holy above all other days, wholly given up to prayer and to the ceremonies in the Temple, Jesus was led before three different tribunals, and nailed to the Cross with His two companions in suffering. This is a moral impossibility which outweighs all the data of the Synoptics. So much so that if—which we do not believe—their texts were irreconcilable, we would have to conclude that, in spite of them, St. John is certainly right. We cannot believe that the crucified remained on the cross during the feast, and that the feast had been inaugurated with the crucifixion. This is inadmissible.

As a matter of fact, the Fourth Gospel clearly indicates that Jesus took His last meal on the thirteenth, in the evening, regardless of the Paschal precept; that He died on the fourteenth, at the moment when they were immolating the victims in the Temple, about three o'clock in the afternoon; that He remained in the sepulchre the fif-

[8] *St. Luke* xxii, 17.
[9] *St. Luke* xxii, 20; I *Cor.* x, 16; xi, 25.

teenth, a day doubly sabbatic that year, since by a happy coincidence, it was at the same time the first day of the Paschal solemnity, and also the ordinary weekly Sabbath; and, finally, that He rose again on the sixteenth, Sunday, or the first day after the Sabbath. In a phrase [10] which is absolutely conclusive, it is asserted that the Last Supper took place *before the festival day of the Pasch.* There is nothing either in the detailed account of the banquet, or in the report of the magnificent discourses that constitute its charm to lead us to believe that the city of Jerusalem was, at that moment, fulfilling the Paschal duty. Moreover, the narrator observes that when Jesus said to Judas, at the end of the meal: "That which thou dost, do quickly," the Apostles thought that He was bidding him buy what was needed for the festival day,[11] and consequently for the preparation of the Paschal banquet. Continuing this same thought he shows us the Jews, on the next morning, refusing to enter the prætorium of Pilate, *that they might not be defiled, but that they might eat the Pasch.*[12] Therefore, according to him, it was that evening only that the festival began with the sacred repast. That is why he calls the day on which Jesus was crucified the Parasceve of the Pasch.[13] The following day is for him an exceptionally solemn Sabbath,[14] doubtless because it was at the same time the Sabbath and the first day of the festival.

In an indirect way, many other reasons seem to sustain the chronology of St. John. Thus the law [15] forbade the Israelite to go beyond the door of his house from the time of the Paschal meal until the next morning. Now, not only Judas, but Jesus and His disciples, had they really

[10] *St. John* xiii, 1.
[11] *St. John* xiii, 29.
[12] *St. John* xviii, 28.
[13] *St. John* xix, 14.
[14] *St. John* xix, 31.
[15] *Exodus,* xii, 22.

eaten the legal Pasch, would seem to have paid no attention to this prescription. The Sanhedrim itself, strict observer as it was of the Sabbatic repose, would seem to have had no scruple, after the Paschal repast, at an hour when every family was obliged to remain in pious recollection indoors, in sending its armed servants out of the city to seize upon Jesus; it would seem to have held its judiciary sitting that night, to have tried and judged an accused man, and, on the next day, to have laid its complaint before the Roman procurator, in spite of the fact that it had solemnly resolved not to cause the arrest during the festival, when all the people would be in the streets of Jerusalem, through fear of an uprising.[16] This is not probable.[17] But, further, according to the Synoptics, on the day on which Jesus was crucified, Simon of Cyrene returned from the fields, Joseph of Arimathea bought a new winding-sheet, the women procured ointments, and Nicodemus, with some friends, took care to entomb the body of the Crucified, after having embalmed it with a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes which they brought to the sepulchre. On Friday, therefore, they might engage in these works, which were forbidden, according to the Mosaic law, on a day of Sabbatic repose, such as the first day of the Paschal week. On the contrary, when evening arrives all work ceases. Friends are forced regretfully to leave the dead half embalmed, and the entombment uncompleted: the law forbids them to do more and obliges the most zealous to shut themselves up in recollection and in absolute repose. Enemies even lay down their arms at the approach of the great feast which is about to begin. The law dispenses the crucified from fur-

[16] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 5.

[17] Cf. the treatise Beza, v, 2, and in general all the Talmudic information concerning the Sabbatic rest and that of the festival days.

ther sufferings, and demands that they be mutilated in order that the spectacle of their agony may not sadden the first joys of the solemnity. All this is a series of decisive arguments in favour of St. John.

At any rate, this divergence has appeared so visibly insurmountable that certain interpreters have proposed a radical solution, by admitting that the Synoptics and St. John spoke of two different meals. In the fourth Gospel it was a banquet held on the evening of the thirteenth, at Bethany or elsewhere, and in the three others the Paschal meal taken on the fourteenth in Jerusalem. But so daring a hypothesis, even though not absolutely untenable, would not suppress the grave difficulty to be found in making the judgment, the execution, and the entombment of Jesus coincide with the first day of the Paschal solemnity; nor would it explain the scruples of the Jews, who refrained from entering Pilate's house, in view of the religious repast of which they were to partake that evening. Besides, can we admit that St. John did not intend to relate the story of Jesus' last supper, when we see him setting forth, one by one, in the account of the Master's final discourses, the proofs of His love that persevered to the end? To accept this explanation would be brutally to break the visible chain of the various clauses of this admirable document, and to misconstrue one of its most delicate and most veracious features. For this succession of discourses that continue without interruption clearly indicates the affectionate disposition of the Master at this time when, to delay the hour of separation, His heart ever finds a word to add to His farewell as father and as friend. However, the difficulty is completely solved by Jesus' words to Peter: "The cock shall not crow, till thou deny me thrice."[18] This night, then, is the only one before Peter's

[18] *St. John* xiii, 38.

fall, and it is, in truth, of Jesus' last supper that the fourth Gospel treats, as well as the other three.

We must, therefore, accept the difficulty just as it is, and, unless we wish to admit a flagrant contradiction between them, we must try to harmonise the Synoptics and St. John. Of the two chronological indications which we must categorically maintain, which one must we explain?

We acknowledge that neither of the two can entirely withstand the good-will or the courage of interpreters. Thus, in St. John, they propose to accept those embarrassing words, *before the festival day of the Pasch*, as if the Evangelist, desiring to adapt himself to the manner of speech of the Greeks, for whom he wrote, represented as beginning on Friday the festival which was inaugurated at sunset the evening before. They also explain the equally conclusive passage,[19] in which the Jews fear lest, in entering Pilate's house, they may become impure and be unable to eat the Pasch, as treating not of the Paschal lamb, but of the other victims, and in particular of the *chagiga*, which was eaten on the second evening of the festival. The day of Our Saviour's death, in that case, was called the *preparation of the Pasch*, merely to indicate that it was the eve of the Paschal Sabbath. The command given to Judas would be understood either of the preparations to be made for the sacrifices of the following day, or of the distribution of alms to be made ready since they were on the eve of a great solemnity. Finally, as far as the prescriptions of the repose for the first day of the festival are concerned, these might have been less severe than for the last, or even for any ordinary Sabbath.[20]

[19] *St. John* xviii, 28.

[20] The text, however, is formal in *Numbers* xxviii, 16: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month shall be the Pasch of the Lord, and on

Several passages of the Talmud seem to prove that there were various practices on this point.[21] Besides, even in St. John, we see the chief priests ordering their servants, during the feast of Tabernacles, to lay hold on Jesus—it is not said, indeed, that they were armed—and even proposing to stone Him on the day of the Dedication. If the Sanhedrim did not wish to take Him during the feast, it was not through respect for the Sabbatic law, but through fear of a popular uprising. As for the execution of the accused, it was the work not of the Jews, but of the Roman soldiers. Finally, the testimony of the Talmud, which is invoked, has no real value, for, being later than the Gospel, it may be less inspired by the Rabbinical tradition than by the apparent opinion of St. John.

Even though these solutions might seem sufficient to minds that are not very exacting, there would still remain the moral impossibility already mentioned: Jesus and the two thieves could not have been crucified on the day of the Passover. On this point the Rabbis are of our opinion, and they assert [22] that Jesus after having sought an advocate in vain for four days was finally tried, stoned, and hanged upon the cross before the opening of the festival.

It were better, therefore, for us to make a close study of the words of the Synoptics. In reality, there is only one text found therein that forbids us to place the death of Jesus on the eve of the Passover, namely, that of St. Matthew and St. Mark.[23] "On the first day of the unleavened bread (the Azymes) when they sacrificed the

the fifteenth the solemn feast; seven days shall they eat unleavened bread. And the first day of them shall be venerable and holy; you shall not do any servile work therein," etc. (See *Exodus* xii, 18; *Lev.* xxiii, 5.)

[21] See the Mishna, treatise, *Yom Tob*, 5, 2; *Megilla*, i, 5; *Sabbath*, 23, 1.

[22] Sanhed., 6, 2: "Traditio est vespera Paschatis suspensum fuisse Jesum."

[23] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 17; *St. Mark* xiv, 12.

pasch the disciples said to Jesus: Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Pasch?" St. Luke employed a vaguer form and said merely: "the day of the unleavened bread came."[24] At an early date modern exegetes thought that the Greek text ought to be translated as if ἡμέρα πρώτη had been written for ἡμέρα προτέρα, and that we should understand not the *first day* of the Azymes, but the *day before* the Azymes.[25] Quite recently A. Resch, in a very interesting work on the Gospels,[26] confirms this solution of the difficulty. The Hebrew text, and not the Aramaic, he claims, was the common source of the Synoptics, and this contained the word קדם, which should be translated, not *first*, but *before*. Hence the difference.

There is something very significant in the fact that, in addition to this passage, the Synoptics seem, inconsistently, it is true, but all the more decisively, to suppose that Jesus was put to death on the eve of the Passover. Thus, they recount, as taking place on the day of the crucifixion, a succession of incidents which are incompatible with the repose and the sanctity of the first day of the Azymes: The meetings of the Sanhedrim, the interviews with Pilate, the appearance before Herod, Simon of Cyrene returning from the fields, Joseph of Arimathea purchasing the shroud, the pious women deciding to forego the embalming because the Sabbatic rest would begin with the setting of the sun, Jesus bidding them seek the banquet-hall at once and, as it were, ahead of time, for the reason that His hour is at hand, in other words, because on the morrow it would be too late. Finally, the following ex-

[24] *St. Luke* xxii, 7: Ἦλθεν δὲ ἡ ἡμέρα τῶν ἀζύμων.

[25] We have seen that this meaning of πρώτη was not unknown.

[26] A. Resch, *Aussercan. Paralleltext zu den Evang.*, Leipzig, 1895. The word קדם was wrongly accepted in the sense of πρῶτος in the Septuagint *Job* xxiii, 8. According to Resch, the original Hebrew was: "Before the day of the Azymes, when they sacrificed the Pasch."

pressions: "the next day, which followed the day of preparation," to designate the day when Jesus was in the tomb; "when evening was now come (because it was the Parasceve, that is, the day before the Sabbath)," to indicate the hour of Jesus' burial, seem to prove completely that, in the Synoptics as well as in St. John, the day of the Crucifixion was, in truth, that which preceded the Paschal festivities.

This, however, does not prevent them from considering Jesus' last supper to be the Paschal meal. On this point, their assertion is irreducible, and we must search for the reasons they had for speaking thus.

These reasons may be reduced to two: either certain usages justified some classes among the Jews in celebrating the Passover a day in advance, or, even without these usages, Jesus may have decided, in view of His imminent death, intentionally to anticipate the repast with which He meant to bring the ancient Passover to an end and to inaugurate the new. In these hypotheses we need take no account of St. John, who, throughout his narrative, makes not a single allusion to the Paschal supper. This silence, moreover, is not any more surprising than that which he preserves concerning the institution of the Eucharist.

Some have therefore thought that Jesus could legally celebrate the Passover on the evening of the thirteenth, because there were already, at this epoch, two methods of determining the first day of the moon. The rabbinistic or traditionalist Jews, as they were called, fixed the date of the new moon according to astronomical calculations, and the *Karäite*, or Scripturalist Jews took as their rule the empiric observation of the phases of the planet.[27] But it was possible that, in cloudy weather, its new and almost

[27] See Iken, *Dissert. Philologico-Theolog.*, vol. ii, p. 337, *et seq.*, dissert. 9, 10, 11; Burman, *Harm. Ev. in Matt.*, ch, xxi.

invisible crescent might escape the eye of the witnesses who sought it in the sky, while it could not deceive the rigorous calculations of the learned, who determined its appearance mathematically according to their charts. A divergence in the fixing of the Passover was, therefore, always possible, since there was danger of not seeing the crescent of the moon until the day after it had really appeared. Of the two calculations, if they did not agree that year, we may believe that Jesus had chosen that of the Rabbis, which was the more exact.[28] He therefore celebrated the Passover on Thursday with the traditionalist Jews, leaving the Scripturalists, who were the more numerous, to celebrate it on Friday. This most ingenious solution would be satisfactory, did not Maimonides, who furnishes us the knowledge of these two methods of observation, say that they commenced only after the destruction of the Temple and the dissolution of the Sanhedrim.

Other exegetes have more happily imagined that, inasmuch as the priests were unable to sacrifice, in three hours' time, the two hundred and fifty thousand lambs [29] needed by the assembled families for the eating of the Passover, permission was granted, in order to avoid the overcrowding of the Temple, to the Jews who came from elsewhere to eat their Paschal lamb on the thirteenth, whereas those of Jerusalem ate it on the fourteenth. If Ebrard, in advancing this ingenious hypothesis, had been able to give some proof in support of it, he would, no doubt, have put an end to the discussion [30]; for this, at least, would ex-

[28] See Michaelis on *St. John* xiii.

[29] According to Josephus (*B. J.*, vi, 9, 3), the exact figure given by the priests to Cestius, who wanted to know it, was 256,500.

[30] Ebrard, who had put forth this hypothesis in the first edition of his book, *Kritik der Evang. Geschichte*, sacrifices it in the second, § 92, for the want of proof to sustain it and because the πρώτῃ τῶν ἀζύμων (*St. Matt.* xxvi, 17), it seems to him, cannot be understood of the thirteenth of Nisan.

plain everything. For, of the two evenings on which the symbolical meal might be taken, Jesus had selected the first, like all the Galileans; the chief priests and their adherents reserved the second for themselves. It was the privilege of the inhabitants of the Holy City to abide in absolute legality, and they did not fail to use it.

Finally, many, and their solution seems not the least satisfactory, have observed that, the Sabbatic prescriptions being extremely rigorous, especially since the innovations of the Pharisees, it was materially impossible to celebrate a great solemnity and a Sabbath without an interval. This would have been to expose themselves to great annoyance and to most painful privations. Hence, it had been determined—and they assure us that this is still practised among the Jews—that if the first day of the Azymes fell on Friday, it would be postponed until the next day, the Sabbath, in order to avoid forty-eight hours of absolute rest. Such was the case the year Jesus died. It may even be that St. Luke means to denounce the violence done to the Mosaic law by the Pharisees, when he says: "The day . . . came, on which *it was necessary* that the pasch should be killed." For these words seem to suppose that the obligation still existed notwithstanding the contrary practice. Jesus accepted neither the exaggerations of the Pharisaical faction in the observance of the Sabbatic rest, nor the suppression or postponement of the first day of the Azymes, and, apart from all those who followed the new interpretation of the law, He celebrated the Passover on the day on which it really fell. Hence, all the apparent divergence of the Evangelical narratives. Jesus ate the Paschal lamb on the fourteenth; the others ate it on the fifteenth, in order to make one single feast of the first day of the Azymes and the weekly Sabbath.

Beyond these various hypotheses, there is only one other

solution of the difficulty, and that is to conclude simply that Jesus ate, not the real Passover, the legal meal, which could take place only on the next day, but what was intended to be a newly instituted Passover. Wishing to be immolated at the same time as the Paschal lamb, He had resolved to anticipate the feast commemorative of the past, and to inaugurate the banquet of the future. By the Mosaic rites which He followed, the meal was, indeed, the antique Passover, but it became, also, the new Passover, by the sacrament which He then instituted. In this explanation, the Apostles had thought only of preparing everything for Friday, the fourteenth of Nisan, about the hour when the first day of the Azymes began. But Jesus suddenly declares that the feast shall be that very night, Thursday. *His time is near at hand.* He does at that time what the others will do on the following day. If anyone is scandalised, events shall prove that he should not be scandalised. If the lamb cannot be immolated in the Temple by the priests who have excommunicated the Master and His disciples, the latter will have recourse to the practice of the ancients, and Peter, delegated by Jesus as the head of the Apostolic family, shall immolate it himself at the house of the host who receives them. After all, what is the value of the symbolic lamb in the feast in which the true Lamb offered up Himself?

The Synoptics may, therefore, have judged that our Lord's last supper had been for them the true Paschal meal. This is an appreciation which St. John refrains from contradicting, although he states clearly, not unnecessarily, that the Jews had not yet eaten their Passover when Jesus was put to death. Whichever supposition we may adopt among these last, which in reality are quite natural, we always arrive at this result, generally admitted nowadays, that Jesus, having taken His last supper with

His disciples on the night of the thirteenth, was crucified on the fourteenth, at the very hour when the Paschal lamb was being immolated. It was, then, with justice that the Apostle after having designated the night of the institution of the Eucharist, not as that of the Paschal meal, but as that of the betrayal by Judas, could say of Jesus dying the next day: "Our Pasch is sacrificed!" To be sure, he might have called Jesus "our Pasch" because of His propitiation, without necessarily alluding to the day and hour of His death. But the argument which he derives from the unleavened bread is absolutely conclusive in favour of St. John. The exclusive use of the Azymes began, in fact, on the evening of the fourteenth as soon as the Paschal lamb was sacrificed. If Jesus had died only on the fifteenth, the allusion made by the Apostle would have no meaning. When all was ready in Jerusalem, the Master took leave of His friends in Bethany. It may be that His unusually sad and tender words of farewell gave them to understand that He was not to return.

The sun was setting fast. The little group turned towards the Holy City, unconscious of the rude tempest that there awaited it.

CHAPTER III

THE LAST SUPPER, AND THE DEPARTURE OF THE BETRAYER

THE JEWS AND THE PASCHAL MEAL—THE FIRST WORDS OF JESUS—THE FIRST CHALICE—THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE END—THE DISPUTE FOR THE FIRST PLACE—THE WASHING OF THE FEET—THE UNNAMED BETRAYER—PETER'S IMPATIENCE AND JOHN'S QUESTION—JUDAS FEELS THAT HE IS UNMASKED. (St. Luke xxii, 14–30; St. John xiii, 1–30; St. Matthew xxvi, 20–25; St. Mark xiv, 17–21.)[1]

WHETHER Jesus was justified by an accepted custom, or simply by His own authority, in anticipating the Paschal meal by one day, we consider it certain, then, that it was the traditional supper that He meant to eat on Thursday, the eve of the real feast of the Passover.[2]

It is not uninteresting to read in the Talmud concerning the rites which were faithfully observed at the Paschal meal. This knowledge of Jewish customs[3] will aid the reader in understanding the narratives that follow.

It was in groups of ten, at least, or of twenty, at most,

[1] By a coincidence, which once more shows the sincerity of our Evangelists, St. John and St. Luke join hands here, as if by chance, and their two narratives (*St. Luke* xxii, 24–30; *St. John* xiii, 1–20), in order to have their natural meaning and succession, ought to be united in one.

[2] *St. John* xiii, 1, is explicit: πρὸ τῆς ἑορτῆς.

[3] See Green, *The Hebrew Feast*, 1886; Kaiser, *O. T. Theol.*, 1894; Stanley, *Hist. of the Jewish Church*, vol. ii, and Schurer, *Über*, φαγεῖν τὸ πάσχα, Giessen, 1883.

that the members of each family were supposed to assemble. The table being ready, each one took his place. The father took the seat of honour. In Egypt, the Hebrews had eaten the Paschal lamb standing; for in those days theirs was the attitude of servants and of slaves. Later, they began to eat it lying down, like free men, and even like kings, according to the expression of the Rabbis.[4] The Paschal meal had, besides, assumed in the course of time, greater proportions than in the beginning, and it would have been difficult to continue standing throughout its whole duration. The guests took their places on low-standing couches, four or five on each divan, the left arm resting on a cushion, the right arm free,[5] and the feet placed behind, so as to rest almost on the floor. The women who were admitted to the banquet simply sat down, as much through modesty as to signify their inferiority. It does not appear that there was even one woman present at Jesus' last supper. When the assembly was numerous, three couches were placed near together so as to form three sides of a square. The table was set up in the vacant space between them, parallel with the couches, leaving one side open, through which the guests were served. Of the three divans forming the *triclinium*, the most honourable was the middle one. On each divan, the most desirable place was the one where the left arm could rest on the balustrade that surrounded the couch, and was purposely made rather high at that part. The other guests had to repose on pillows only, which were less comfortable.[6]

[4] Maimonides, *Pesachim*, x, 1.

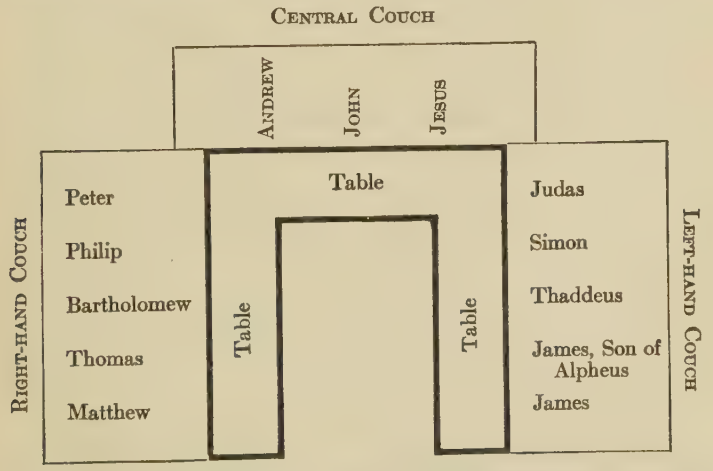
[5] When St. John is said to have reclined upon our Lord's bosom at the Last Supper, we are to understand that he occupied the cushion next to Jesus.

[6] This will explain farther on how St. Peter, although keeping his privileged place among the Apostles, could have been far enough away from the Master to be obliged to appeal to St. John, when he wished to learn the name of the traitor, and how Judas, on the contrary, was near enough to Jesus to receive directly from Him the piece of bread which designated him as the

Each one took his place according to rules of precedence which were rigorously observed, and a first cup of wine was poured out. Then the head of the family rising, solemnly pronounced the first benediction: "This day," he said, "recalls our deliverance. It commemorates our departure out of Egypt. Blessed be the Lord, the Eternal, Who created the fruit of the vine!" And, having drunk from the chalice, he passed it to the guests, who drank in turn.

At this moment, a basin and water were brought into the room, for the accustomed purification, and each one

criminal in question. Jesus must have presided on the middle divan and consequently have reclined on the place to the left. Peter, to whom belonged the second place, presided perhaps on the couch to the right of the Master, and was thus at the junction of the two. James, no doubt, must have presided on the third divan. John thus had the fourth place, immediately at the right of the Master. As for Judas, he was the last or the next to the last on the divan over which James presided. We may imagine the arrangement to be similar to that in the figure below:



Singularly enough the Master was thus between the disciple "whom He loved," and Judas, "who was going to betray him."

washed his hands. The bitter herbs, which were meant to commemorate the food of Egypt, were served immediately afterwards.[7] A portion of them was eaten, with or without the seasoning called *charoset*,[8] which also had its symbolical meaning. It consisted, according to some, of a mixture of water and vinegar; according to others, of a strongly spiced preparation of vinegar, figs, dates, and almonds. This food, which was a kind of rather adhesive pulp, recalled by its colour, it is said, the clay which the Hebrews had long before laboriously moulded, in the construction of the cities of the Pharaohs, their oppressors. After this, the unleavened bread was passed around. This might be of wheat, of spelt, of barley, of oats, or of rye, but never of rice or of maize.[9] Ordinarily, however, it was made of wheat flour and very clear water, in carefully cleansed vessels, without having time to ferment. It was round and flat in shape. It had the taste of our modern sea-biscuit, and recalled the bread of affliction eaten in Egypt, at the time of the precipitous flight towards the Red Sea.

Finally, the Paschal lamb was brought in and laid in the middle of the table, before the head of the family. Immolated ordinarily in the Temple, in accordance with the rites commemorative of the past, it was served whole, with head, feet, and intestines. These last were fastened to its sides, while it was being roasted, and the lamb, according to the expression of the Rabbis, thus had the air of a soldier armed from head to foot. In holding it over the fire, a spit made of pomegranate wood was used, which, fitted with a small cross-piece, had the exact form of a

[7] Lettuce, radish, endive, parsley, cresses, etc.

[8] It is probably this condiment that is meant in *St. John* xiii, 26, and in *St. Matth.* xxvi, 23. The books of Moses do not mention it, but it was none the less indispensable for the Paschal meal.

[9] *Pesachim* ii, 5.

cross. St. Justin [10] found in this another point of resemblance between the symbolic lamb and the true Lamb, Jesus Christ.

For the second time wine was poured into the chalice, and, in keeping with the precept of Moses,[11] the son asked the father to explain the signification of the feast. Thereupon, the father of the family related in detail all that his people had endured in Egypt, how they had been delivered from servitude, and he intoned the Hallel, which the whole assembly began to chant, beginning with the psalm: "Praise the Lord, ye children, praise ye the name of the Lord," [12] to the end of the dithyramb celebrating the departure from Egypt and the deliverance of the house of Jacob from the hands of a barbarous people.

It was after this that the Paschal lamb was cut into pieces and eaten. A third cup of wine again passed around, and, a little later, a fourth. Four psalms [13] were chanted, of which the first two expressed the more personal sentiments of confidence and gratitude to Jehovah, while the last two resumed the enthusiastic tone of the festival. Then a fifth cup of wine was poured out, and the whole terminated joyously with the two canticles which seem more especially to have constituted the great Hallel.[14]

We must not expect to find all the details of the Mosaic rite exactly set forth in the accounts that follow. The Evangelists' chief care was to preserve the Christian side of the last supper, and not the Jewish side. If they have left sufficient indications to show that the Saviour remained

[10] The text coming from a learned man, a native of Samaria, is most remarkable. (*Dial. c. Tryph.*, ch.-xl.)
[11] *Exod.* xii, 26.
[12] *Ps.* cxii.
[13] *Ps.* cxiv, cxv, cxvi, cxvii.
[14] *Ps.* cxxxiv, cxxxv.

submissive to the law unto the end, they give them an importance little enough to have us know that although He celebrated the Jewish Passover, He meant to put an end to it forever, and to inaugurate the Christian Passover. Hence, the Mosaic ceremony disappears somewhat in their narration, as the background recedes in a picture, and the Eucharistic banquet, alone, absorbs every ray of light.

When He entered into the large and beautiful room prepared for the occasion, Jesus, in deep emotion, began to give expression to all the affections, regrets, and wishes of His soul. St. Luke, who, however, does not maintain a faultless chronological order in this portion of his narrative,[15] agrees with St. John in designating explicitly what the other two Evangelists have only hinted at. "Jesus," says the well-beloved disciple, "at the time of the paschal banquet,[16] knowing that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world to the Father; having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end." [17] The various incidents of the meal, the institution of the great sacrament, His discourses, and, finally, His death, were to be the eloquent proof of this. Then approaching the table, He said, according to St. Luke, "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer." [18] These affectionate words were full of

[15] Inversions must be made in St. Luke's text in order to adapt badly classed fragments to the ever faultless succession of St. John. But, as may be seen here, we succeed in doing so without any too great difficulty and in establishing an order as natural as it is logical.

[16] This seems to us to be the natural sense of *πρὸ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα.*

[17] It is a bad translation to take *εἰς τέλος* as signifying "to the end of His life." The Evangelist does not wish to say that Jesus continues to love His own until the moment of His death—that is evident enough. We must understand here that it is a question not of the end of his life, but of the end or extreme limits of love. Jesus exhausted on that last evening of farewells everything that the most tender affection is capable of imagining.

[18] It is truly the Paschal meal which is before Him. If it is served on the eve of the day designated in the Law it is because He wills to eat it with His

sadness. One may not speak of dying without causing his whole being to tremble with horror. Yet Jesus declares that He has desired the present moment, however terrible may be the one that is to follow. This farewell meal tells Him of His approaching return to His Father, of the end of His exile here below, of the beginning of the redemption of mankind.

Looking at the table on which are spread the dishes of the banquet, He says with increasing emotion: "I say to you that from this time, I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." He had done with types; and they were nearing the end. The Apostles have never been willing to believe that any catastrophe would occur; yet, in a few hours, they shall see it realised. For Jesus, there shall be no more banquets on earth. After this one, He will go to take His place at the banquet of the Eternal Passover, in the glory of His Father.

According to the ordinary ceremonial, a chalice [19] full of wine should have been offered Him then for the solemn benediction. The rôle of head of the family belonged to Him by every title. After the benediction, having Himself moistened His lips in the chalice, He said: "Take and divide it among you; for I say to you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine [20] till the Kingdom of God come." Thus He asserts more clearly than ever the nearness of

own *before dying*. He anticipates the hour because to-morrow will be too late.

[19] The word δεξάμενος seems to indicate this. This chalice (*St. Luke* xxii, 17, ποτήριον without the article) is distinguished in importance from the chalice which He will consecrate a little later, v. 20, τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον.

[20] We see in this expression a trace of the official prayer which we have heard above from the lips of the father of the family. *St. Matt.* xxvi, 29, and *St. Mark* xiv, 25, place these words after the communion of the Apostles. We hesitate to say that they are right rather than *St. Luke* xxii, 18, for the latter mentions what the others have omitted, namely, a first benediction and distribution of wine, marking the beginning of the Paschal supper. Here it is St. Luke who seems the more exact.

His death. It is not only His last Passover, it is also His last supper.

The chalice was passed around, perhaps without following the usual order of precedence. There were hurt feelings and protestations, and all at once a lively discussion arose. This was neither the time nor the place for it, but we know what importance human vanity gives to such questions, and with what ardour it often claims the most unfounded rights.

At this moment, each one,[21] before taking his appointed place, had to go and purify himself at a common ewer.[22] We have said that the order of precedence was rigorously observed in every Jewish family. But here, perhaps, the irregular manner in which the chalice had been passed around at the beginning of the meal may have caused some apprehension of disagreeable disputes in the seating of the guests. Jesus, with pity and tenderness, began to repeat to the Apostles the beautiful lessons He had taught them long before, but by which they had profited so little: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called beneficent."[23] Flattery and fear frequently go so far as to praise and thank tyrants for their despotism. Such is the excess of human

[21] It is most surprising that certain interpreters should have decided to place the washing of the feet in the middle or at the end of the meal. This practice, altogether useless, once the meal is begun, would have been contrary to all laws of hygiene. It was important that the feet should be clean at the moment when the guests reclined on the divans, so that they should not annoy their neighbour with any odour. As a legal purification also, this practice ought to precede the repast. As for the expression δείπνου γενομένου it may easily mean the meal being served, being ready. See *Tobias* ii, 1. The Alexandrine reading γινομένου solves the difficulty by signifying that the meal was just beginning.

[22] This ewer is mentioned in *St. John* xiii, 5, with the article τὸν νιπτῆρα, to indicate that it was a necessary piece of furniture in every apartment where a meal was served.

[23] Thus one of the Ptolemies had been surnamed *Euergetes, benefactor*. Philo also gives this flattering title to Caligula: σωτὴρ καὶ εὐεργέτης.

folly that it ventures to decorate wicked princes with the title of benefactors, doubtless for the good that they do, not to their people, but to themselves. "But you will not be so," continues Jesus, "but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and he that is the leader, as he that serveth." In the Christian idea of primacy, one is first in order that he may give, and not that he may receive. To rise in the hierarchy of the Church is nothing more than to render more imperative the obligation of sacrificing one's self for the greater number. "For which is the greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth." [24]

He had no sooner finished speaking than He stood ready, in sublime humility, to add example to precept. The better He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that, having come from God, He was going to return to Him once more, the more He desired that this lesson should be a memorable one for all. In vain did His heart rebel at the thought that He must render even to the traitor the most humiliating of services. He quickly divested Himself of those outer garments that might have impeded Him, arranged a towel about His loins, and, thus transformed into a servant, He made ready to wash the feet of His disciples, who gazed upon Him in amazement. In sketching this incomparable scene, St. John seems to be even yet under the profound impression it had produced upon him.

Having poured water into the ewer, Jesus began to fulfil His humble ministrations. He went from one to the

[24] *St. Luke* (xxii, 27), does not seem to suspect the precise act to which this saying of the Lord refers. In fact he says nothing of the washing of the feet which *St. John* xiii, 4, *seq.*, has alone related. The documents from which he draws did not mention this incident. The agreement between the two Evangelists, across this hiatus, is all the more remarkable.

other, and each, astonished and embarrassed, suffered Him to do as He wished. He came at length [25] to Peter, who, in his own mind, was indignant on seeing his colleagues thus accept the services of the Master. "Lord!" he exclaims, as he beholds Jesus on His knees, about to take his feet into His divine hands, "dost thou wash my feet?" Jesus gently answers: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." He demands obedience first of all, and promises an explanation later on. But Peter sees and understands only this, that his Master wishes to become his servant, and with still greater energy he utters an exclamation in which we perceive the movement of a man who forcibly draws back his feet, which were already in the grasp of Jesus: "Thou shalt never wash my feet," he says. And Our Lord, with an accent of kindness, astonished at such obstinacy, and wondering if He must pass him by, replies: "If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me." The threat was peremptory. Peter, although he does not understand its full meaning, sees that to refuse longer would be to break with the Master. This is sufficient to change his determination and, awaiting no further argument, he exclaims, with the ardour of a nature that always goes to extremes: "Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head." Jesus, always grave and kind, answers: "He that is washed, needeth not but to wash his feet, but is clean wholly." [26]

[25] It does not appear that Jesus began with Peter. Verse 5 indicates the beginning, as verse 12 does the end of the washing of the feet. The incident with Peter did not take place at the beginning. The Apostle had been looking on for a while. Hence his indignant protest, and the significant "therefore," οὖν of the Evangelist.

[26] It is probable that the disciples had bathed themselves on that day in order to be the better prepared for the Paschal festival. The only part of their bodies that could have become soiled on leaving the bath, and especially on the road, was their feet.

Jesus' thought immediately rose in rapid gradation from the act of humility by which He washes His disciples' feet, to the act of supreme expiation and abnegation by which He will redeem their souls on the morrow.[27] The all-powerful grace of His redemption fills them even in advance and sanctifies them. He Who now purifies their feet in the lustral water is pleased also to purify their whole being by the merits of His approaching immolation. "And you are clean!" He exclaims, in the highest sense of the word; and then, as if a sorrowful impression reminded Him of the truth, and as if His eye had instinctively turned towards Judas, He sadly says: "But not all." For the moment, the allusion to the traitor goes no farther. Jesus still shelters him with a goodness the more merciful, since, while washing his feet, He felt the impotency of His grace before so evil a heart.

Then, having resumed the garments which He had doffed, He sat down to table to begin the repast. The disciples took their places on their couches, this time without the courage to engage in any new dispute. The lesson so heroically given had too deeply moved them. To make its fruit the surer, Jesus added: "Know you what I have done to you? You call Me Master and Lord: and you say well, for so I am. If then I, being your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.[28] For I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you do also. Amen, amen, I say to you: The servant is not greater than his lord, neither is

[27] We may say that one of the characteristics of Jesus' discourses in St. John, is that, although beginning with a simple and familiar conversation, they rise suddenly to the loftiest spheres of the supernatural. The Master pursues them with their twofold sense transcendent and familiar, and His thought never fails in clearness.

[28] Jesus does not hereby institute a sacrament. He gives an example ὑπόδειγμα of humanity and charity to be followed. Accordingly He tells them not to do *what* He has done, but *as* (καθώς) He has done.

the apostle greater than he that sent him. If you know these things, you shall be blessed if you do them." Once more do they hear that to be the first in dignity is to be the first for the sacrifice. If, therefore, there is any primacy, it must be overshadowed by generosity of devotion. Jesus is King only that He may sacrifice His life in the interests of His people, absolutely, in His immolation, relatively, but also really, in the successive acts of charity, affection, solicitude, with which He pursues, teaches, encourages, and transforms sinners.

Such shall be the conduct of the true disciples. This precept cannot be for the wicked one who is preparing to kill his Master. He who tramples on the most elementary rights of humanity cannot know the blessed joy of sacrifice. "I speak not of you all," continues Jesus; "I know whom I have chosen." With all his hypocrisy Judas has never deceived the Master's eye. Jesus has watched him descending, step by step, into the abyss of malice where he is now half buried. If He has suffered him in His presence until now, it is because it was necessary that the evil element of the world should be represented even in the Apostolic circle. It would seem that it is the law, even of divine things, to admit evil together with the good, the better to set off the latter, and to show all the power of the former over our nature when rebellious against the influence of grace. Moreover, it was said that Jesus' heart would know every grief. The impudent ingratitude of the traitor, endured unto the end, was to be not the least bitter. Thus the victim was going to expiate, by personal experience of their consequences, all the evil affections of our criminal hearts. "But," says Jesus, "that the Scripture may be fulfilled: *He that eateth bread with Me, shall lift up his heel against Me.*" For, it is to Him, the afflicted Just One, and not to David, that these words of

the Psalmist directly refer,[29] and most appropriately, for they are seated at table, and Judas is eating the bread of Him Whom he is betraying.

This likening of the traitor to the beast who stealthily raises his foot against his master while the latter is giving him his feed, was happily chosen to humble the betrayer's pride, at the risk of deepening his concentrated and awful hate. Jesus uses no further policy, He determines to unmask him. Foreseen and foretold, the treason of the wicked disciple will fortify the faith of those who have remained true. Were He to appear not to have suspected it, He would leave them under the impression that He had fallen beneath the stroke of an unforeseen conspiracy. He means to prove before all that, being a willing victim unto the end, although betrayed and crucified, He was ever stronger than His oppressors. "At present I tell you before it come to pass; that when it shall come to pass, ye may believe that I am He."

At the same time, in order to trouble the wretch's soul with one last regret, He leads the conversation back to the happy lot of His true friends. "And you are they," He says, "who have continued with Me in My temptations. And I dispose to you, as the Father hath disposed to Me, a kingdom." They shall have it first on earth, where they shall be the representatives of God Himself: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me."[30] They shall exercise this royalty also in heav-

[29] *Ps.* xl, 10. . . . where the afflicted just person sets down amongst his trials the treason of a friend. Historically it is of David that he is speaking. The King, in fact (verse 5), asks pardon of God for his sin, and calls for help from on high against his enemies. Nevertheless the Messianic ideal is realized in Jesus, in Whom are united all the sorrows of the righteous sufferer.

[30] This verse, *St. John* xiii, 20, which has no connection with that which precedes it, ought to be inserted in the text of *St. Luke* xxii, 29, where it finds

en: "That you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." As for Judas, ambitious, selfish, traitor, he shall have none of all this, because he was not wise enough to await it in patient fidelity and generous faith. He who goes abroad into the highways of crime is certain to find there only shame and woe. While the other Apostles shall be the authorised and honoured representatives of the Master on earth and in heaven, Judas shall have the eternal remorse of having been only His assassin.

Hypocrisy, when well studied, gives the wicked a brazen front, and the most direct blows seem to find them insensible. In the face of all these allusions, the faithless Apostle preserved a fair countenance, and none had yet dreamt of suspecting him. It was well, for the just indignation of them all would have dispatched him quickly, thus impeding the fulfilment of the providential plan. However, from this moment, we see in the Gospel story that the wretch's presence weighs more and more heavily on the Master's heart, causing it the greatest pain. The time is come for Him to employ decisive means to be rid of him, if He wishes to have around Him none but the truly faithful in the hour of His last farewell. And, in fact, Jesus, from this moment, goes on multiplying His allusions, which become more and more touching and transparent, until the traitor, in self-denunciation, decides to quit the assembly in a hurry.[31]

"Amen, amen, I say to you," continued the Master,

its proper place for the simple reason that the accounts of these two Evangelists should here be welded into one.

[31] Jesus' double intention seems to have been not to name him, in order to allow the designs of Providence to be accomplished, and at the same time to prove that He knows him, in order to show that He had not blindly become his victim. By making this clear, much has been done to reconcile the apparent divergence of the Synoptics and St. John.

" one of you shall betray Me." Coming so positive from His lips, these words frightened them and filled them with sadness. All deemed themselves accused, since no one in particular was designated. They looked at one another, as if they would prove their innocence by their eyes, the mirrors of their souls, in their eagerness to discover the real culprit. Then each one,[32] strengthened by the good testimony of his conscience, and desirous of reaching the truth by way of elimination, took pains to ask: " Is it I, Lord? " Jesus simply replied: " One of the twelve, who dippeth with Me his hand in the dish." [33] This answer explained nothing, for it was nothing else than a variation of the Psalmist's words, already cited, in order to indicate that the traitor was one of the guests. The Apostles understood it so, and the most devoted were seized with impatience, for the Saviour's latest declaration had only made the situation the keener.

St. John has given us an altogether personal account, which reveals quite vividly this present disposition of the Apostles' minds. One of the disciples, he says—speaking of himself [34]—was leaning on Jesus' bosom. The Master

[32] Except Judas, who asks this question a little later, although *St. Matt.* xxvi, 25, seems to say that he asked it here. This Evangelist recounts all at once that which St. John gives more in detail, dramatically and with a lively colouring which denotes the eye-witness who is still under the emotion caused by these events.

[33] It is wrong to think that this was a clear statement, and that Judas was putting his hand into the dish at the moment when Jesus spoke thus. Had He designated him so clearly, how could the Master have prevented the indignation of all from bursting forth immediately? And Judas' subsequent question: "Is it I?" would have been superfluous.

[34] This detail, together with *St. John* xxi, 21, serves to remove the veil of secrecy with which the beloved disciple of Jesus conceals himself throughout his Gospel. For he who wishes to follow Peter and whom Jesus obliges to remain till He comes is the same who here leans upon the Master's bosom. But he who must remain cannot be either Peter, or Thomas, or Nathaniel. since it is characteristic of him to continue unnamed. He is one of the two sons of Zebedee who are the last to be mentioned simply because the Evangelist is one of them. James having died long since, it is indeed to John alone that the promise of long life can be applied in verse 22.

honoured him with a very special affection. Peter, who was too far off to obtain directly the confidence which he desired, made a sign to this disciple to ask, with greater discretion, of whom He spoke. Peter and John, the one the head, and the other the heart, of the Apostolic college, both privileged, the former by reason of the dignity he had received, the latter by the affection he shared, lived [35] in such intimate relations that they needed no more than a sign to understand each other. Suddenly raising himself on his couch, the well-beloved disciple lovingly laid his head back upon Jesus' breast, and, in a low voice, while the others were exchanging their impressions, asked who the traitor was. Jesus consented to tell him, but with enough caution to prevent its being made known to the impetuous Simon-Peter. "He it is," said Jesus quite softly, "to whom I shall hand the morsel." They had possibly reached that point in the meal when the head of the family, mingling a portion of the bitter herbs with the unleavened bread, dipped them in the *charoset* and distributed them to the guests in turn. But, as it is a custom in the East for the head of the house to present, from time to time, during the meal, a morsel of bread or of meat to his guests to show his affection, we may believe that Jesus chose this sign to make one last appeal to the traitor's heart, and it was because this appeal went unheeded that the demon finally triumphed. John understood, but seeing that the Master did not wish to utter the culprit's name, concluded that he himself was bound to silence. His heart was struck by the frightful revelation; he drew back in mute sadness, while Peter remained as perplexed as before.

As for the traitor, Jesus' immediate, or, at least, very near neighbour, since he could receive the morsel of dipped

[35] *St. John* xx, 2; xxi, 7; *St. Luke* v, 10; xxii, 8; *Acts* iii, 4; viii, 14.

bread from His hand, had probably heard His reply to John's question. Besides, less occupied than the others in expressing any suspicions or in evincing any surprise, he paid closer attention to the acts and words of the Master. Feeling that he was discovered, he had now only to throw himself at the Master's feet or to take to flight. The bit of bread he had just received proved that all communication between him and Jesus had not been broken off, and that His forgiveness was still possible. But, to deserve it, there was need of great courage and a great soul. The wretched man's only spiritual possession was great perversity. He braced himself against the voice of conscience, and the violent effort he put forth to resist the inspiration of grace exposed his heart, wide open, to the extremest influence of evil. This is probably what moved St. John to say that after having taken the morsel of bread, Judas was abandoned to the demon. His soul's trouble revealed itself even outwardly. His attitude became detestable; and Jesus, no longer restraining His indignation, abruptly flung at him these words which were a continuation of a mute dialogue that for a moment had been going on between the Victim and the executioner: "That which thou dost, do quickly!" As the rest were unaware of all that had preceded, they did not comprehend the meaning of this. Their thought was that the Master had just commanded the ordinary steward of the Apostolic group to purchase all that was necessary for the festival, and to distribute the customary alms to the poor. Judas was not deceived; he saw that the storm was about to break, and being incapable of resisting longer the glance that pierced him through, he made ready to depart. For Jesus had assumed a solemn and prophetic tone: "The Son of Man, indeed, goeth, as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed!

It were better for him, if that man had not been born!" At the same time, Judas arose, and boldly throwing aside his mask, he asked challengingly: "Is it I, Rabbi?" Jesus made answer: "Thou hast said it." And in the midst of the general dismay, before the just wrath of the most ardent could break forth, the traitor was gone.[36]

"It was night."

These simple words of St. John are the last stroke of the brush in this awful picture. A darkness, depressing and cold, settled down upon the souls of men as well as upon the walls of the city.

[36] St. John's expression εὐθέως ἐξῆλθεν, or εὐθύς according to one version, tells how precipitate his departure was. As one may see, it is upon this that we have based our arrangement of the various incidents that filled the beginning of the meal. We believe that in so doing we have explained the most embarrassing divergences. It is very true that in the opinion of several of the Fathers of the Church, Judas partook of Holy Communion. They followed what appears to be the testimony of *St. Luke* xxii, 19–23. But *St. Mark* xiv, 18–22, and *St. Matthew* xxvi, 21–26, clearly prove that once again, in the history of that night, the third Synoptic has not preserved the exact order of events. We certainly cannot admit that, after Jesus had replied to Judas: "Thou hast said it," the traitor could have remained at table and received communion with the others. Thus, from the earliest times, from the author of the *Constitutiones Apostolicæ*, down to St. Hilary, many Doctors, and those not the least worthy of consideration, inspired by a more rational exegesis, have judged that the Holy Eucharist was not instituted until after the departure of Judas. Quite different are the views of the orator who seeks to impress his audience, from those of the exegete who must harmonise four distinct and severally independent narratives. Let us add that to this critical and, in itself, decisive argument which excludes Judas from participation in the Eucharist, are joined moral arguments of the highest importance. For it seems difficult to admit that Jesus should have allowed hypocritical hatred thus to approach and receive from His own hands the Sacrament of His Love distributed for the first time. Can it be that so august an institution was marred by so unworthy a sacrilege? Can we believe that He Who was unwilling to begin His farewell discourse and to open His soul to His disciples' hearts before Judas had departed, could have decided to give the traitor His Body and His Blood as the guarantee of a redemption in which he was not to share and of a tenderness which his evil heart was incapable of comprehending? Such a thing is incredible, and Jesus saying to the Apostles (*St. Matt.* xxvi, 29) that He will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when He shall drink it new *with them* in the Kingdom of His Father, beholds only those who are of the *elect* around Him, and shows that Judas had gone out, for the criminal could have no part in the eternal banquet.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAST SUPPER—*Continued.*

THE DISCOURSES—JESUS ON HIS MESSIANIC CAREER NOW DRAWING TO A CLOSE—THE CHURCH AND THE NEW COMMANDMENT—"LORD, WHITHER GOEST THOU?"—ABANDONMENT BY THE APOSTLES—THE PREDICTION OF PETER'S FALL—THE TWO SWORDS. (St. John xiii, 31–38; St. Matthew, xxvi, 31–35; St. Mark xiv, 27–31; St. Luke xxii, 31–38.)[1]

THE departure of Judas was a relief to the Master's soul. From now on He has to deal only with friends, and His heart, henceforth, can open freely. While the disciples are finishing the Paschal meal, interrupted for a moment by the incident with the traitor, He begins, therefore, with the admirable series of His final discourses, His spiritual testament in favour of the Church. If there is nothing more touching than the *novissima verba*, the last words of a man who is about to die, we must say that there is nothing more divine than these farewell discourses of Jesus.

As the workman, at the close of day, contemplates the

[1] We think that the counsels given to the Apostles and the prediction of Peter's denial should be placed before the institution of the Holy Eucharist, so that all of Our Lord's touching recommendations may not be put back to the end of the supper. Natural as it is to suppose that He did not cease to enrich the banquet with His divine words, it seems difficult to postpone all His discourses until the close of the feast. Besides, to place the institution of the Holy Eucharist immediately after the traitor's exit, would be to introduce it *ex abrupto* and without preparation.

fruit of his labours, so the Master, at the end of His career, embraces in one glance His whole life. Following the example of the Father, Who, having completed the work of creation, was pleased with what He saw, He Himself asserts, after His painful and thankless mission, that while ever faithful, He has never known discouragement. "Now is the Son of Man glorified," He exclaims, "and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God also will glorify Him in Himself, and immediately will He glorify Him." A life replete with virtues, to which all must pay homage, is the most beautiful hymn that man can sing to the glory of God. The life of Jesus, by its holiness, its charity, its sacrifice, has been but one perpetual song of praise sent up to the Father. So, in return, the glorified Father will prove His appreciation, and will glorify Him both on earth and in heaven. The clear view that Jesus has of His heavenly recompense and of His decisive influence on the world when He is upon the Cross, is the consolation of His soul in the hour of anguish. The confidence with which He speaks, as He looks at the past and the future, is lawful homage done to the perfection of His work. Later on, Paul, in the simplicity of a deeply religious nature, will imitate Him, in reminding us himself, of the good fight he has fought, and of the reward which is reserved for him.

For a moment Jesus seems to find rest in this sweet sentiment; then suddenly, as if a bitter thought had crossed His soul, His words become filled with tenderness and emotion. He has just gazed upon death face to face. "Little children," He says, "yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me, and as I said to the Jews: Whither I go, ye cannot come; so I say to you now." With what admirable kindness He thinks of the pain of His poor little ones, when they shall seek and not find Him. To be sure,

He will still help those who will pray in His name, and by His teaching, His influence, His grace, He will not cease to dwell in the midst of them; the Sacrament He is about to institute will keep Him even substantially present until the end of the world; but notwithstanding all this, Jesus shall not be visible, palpable, enfolding His timid flock with His glance, refreshing them with His love, inciting them by His example, marching at their head like a commanding chief and a protecting father. To some extent, the Apostles must be sufficient to themselves, and find in the depth of their hearts a force energetic enough to insure the life and full development of the Church. This force, the most needful after the grace of God, He is about to define and name.

"A new commandment I give unto you," says the Master; "that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." It was unheard of, in the history of mankind, that a society should be founded on charity, as the distinctive sign of its members, its chief means of defence, and its principle of development. But this is what Jesus has decreed. As long as He dwelt in the midst of the Church, He was the vital, visible, efficacious bond that maintained its unity; when He is no longer present in a visible way, a powerful, generous sentiment must occupy His place. This sentiment, which is the purest expression of Himself, is no other than charity. As a matter of fact, this law of love was the influence that insured the rapid development of the nascent Church. Before these men who, as Minutius Felix says, loved even before they knew one another, paganism was filled with admiration, and, having studied them more closely, became Christian in order to imitate them.

Without dwelling on this sublime advice, Peter, whose heart sought a means, not of replacing the absent Master, but of preventing His departure, exclaimed: "Lord, whither goest thou?" His devotedness admits no obstacle strong enough to withhold him from following in His wake, whithersoever He may go. "Whither I go," answers Jesus, "thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow hereafter."[2] Peter saith to Him: "Why cannot I follow Thee now?" In his enthusiasm, Peter forgot that he had a providential part to fulfil among his brethren before he should go to rejoin his Master. Besides, had he understood the mysteries of grace, he would have known that before he could die for his Master, it was necessary to wait until his Master had died for him.[3] This is what Jesus lets him know by foretelling his approaching defection.

"Simon, Simon,[4] behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." The book of Job shows us Satan claiming in God's presence the right of testing man, and guaranteeing to make him a sharer, by means of temptation, in his own perversity. It pleases this evil spirit to cast a doubt upon the constancy of the just, and to bring

[2] Peter was to suffer not only martyrdom, but the martyrdom of the cross.

[3] "Quid festinas, Petre?" says St. Augustine, "nondum te suo spiritu solidavit Petra."

[4] Here again we blend in one the Synoptic narratives and that of St. John. Nowhere in the Gospel does one perceive better the independence of the various accounts. Thus *St. Matth.* xxvi, 31, and *St. Mark* xiv, 26, seem to place the prediction of the denial after the thanksgiving and on the road to Gethsemane. These differences have no importance when we realise that in the Synoptics the general term τότε does not constitute a strict chronological standard, or if we admit the possibility of unimportant inaccuracies, while claiming the inspiration of the writings in which they occur. In the present instance, the preciseness with which St. John declares that the prophecy of the denial took place in the supper-room would be decisive even if St. Luke had not spoken to the same effect.

suspicion upon their virtue. Convinced that he can corrupt them at will, he asks God to expose them to his influence. It is then, that, passing them through the sieve of temptation by a succession of trials, he means to prove before all how truly just they are. Thus the farmer sifts the remains of the harvest upon the threshing-floor and ascertains how much good grain they contain after the wind has blown away the chaff and the sieve has let the bad grain pass through. Happily for Peter, side by side with the violent influence of Satan is the gentler, but no less powerful pleading of the Saviour. God may expose the Apostles, still feeble in faith, to diabolical influence; Jesus has prayed for them, and their fall, however shameful, shall not be definitive. Peter, in particular, the most remiss of all in his denial, shall make the most generous and most decisive return. For his faith, compromised for a moment by a moral fall, shall never again be darkened, and, henceforth indefectible, it will revive that of his brethren no less tried than his own.

"Ye shall all be scandalised in my regard this night," added Jesus; "for it is written: I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed.[5] But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." Because He saw in His approaching humiliation the scandal that was going to endanger the fidelity of His own followers, the Master hastened to add a ray of light to relieve the gloom; on the morrow of the Passion and of Calvary He sets forth His resurrection and His stay in Galilee. But Peter does not understand this; he attends only to his own thoughts. Continuing, therefore, his

[5] Jesus here alludes to *Zach.* xiii, 7. For the shepherd in this prophecy can be no other than the Messiah, and the flock the people of the covenant of whom the Apostles are the first representatives. This passage is cited not after the Septuagint, which seems to have wrongly understood it, but after the original text.

demonstration of enthusiasm, he cries out: "Although all shall be scandalised in Thee, I will never be scandalised. Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death." "Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me?" replies Jesus, with a shade of irony, quite marked in St. John; "amen, amen, I say to thee, to-day, even in this night before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice." The Jews distinguished three crowings of the cock; the first after midnight, the second at three o'clock; the third at dawn.[6] In a few hours, therefore, and before dawn Peter, the resolute man, the courageous friend, the faithful and valiant disciple, will have cowardly denied his Master. The others will have merely fled from the field of battle, but he will have remained there, not to fight, as he had promised, but to surrender his arms to a maid-servant; not to defend Jesus, but to protest that he knows Him not. And this protestation will be expressed in a few hours as shamelessly as he now obstinately tells of his unfailing attachment. For, strong in his present disposition, the presumptuous man persists, in spite of the Master's words, in auguring well of the future. He does not know that the most energetic resolutions of the soul, when under evil influences, vanish like snow beneath the rays of the sun. With still greater energy, he cries out: "Al-

[6] See Buxtorf, p. 384, *Keriat haggeber*, and Lightfoot on *John*. xiii, 38, who cites the three names given in the treatise *Joma*, fol. 21, to these three crowings of the cock. Compare Winer on the word *Nachtwache*. Nearly all the peoples of ancient times availed themselves of these three calls of the wakeful bird to know the hour of the night. The second crowing called by the Latin authors *secunda gallicinia*, and by the Greeks τὸ δεύτερον ἀλεκτρύων is, no doubt the one to which the three Evangelists refer when they speak of only one crowing of the cock. It was the principal and the loudest one. So that St. Mark, though speaking of two crowings, agrees with them in asserting that the denial must occur that very night, before the second crowing. As a matter of fact, all agree in saying that Jesus foretold to Peter that he would deny Him three times before three o'clock in the morning.

though I should die together with Thee, I will not deny Thee!" and the others spoke as he did.

The Master said nothing more. It was His intention to allow the rash pride of this man to be broken by a humiliating fall, in order to instruct and thus to form by this sad experience, the man who was to govern His Church. It is not rarely that nature is pleased at times to bring back health to the sick, through means of a crisis in which they seem about to depart this life. It is always with profit that a man tastes of the bitterness of misfortune, before becoming a shepherd of souls. In his own trials he becomes possessed of the knowledge and the courage necessary to sympathise with the weaknesses of others.

The storm will be more terrible than they think. "When I sent you," says Jesus, "without purse and scrip and shoes, did ye want anything?" They reply: "Nothing." Those were the best days of their apostolate. On their way, many friends received them; their Master's fame was their support, and no one dared undertake anything against them. Those happy days are to be followed by most critical times. "But now," Jesus adds, "he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip; and he that hath not, let him sell his coat, and buy a sword. For, I say to you, that this that is written must yet be fulfilled in Me: And with the wicked was He reckoned.[7] For the things concerning Me have an end." The malediction hurled against the Master will include the disciples, and His enemies will be their irreconcilable opponents.

The disciples, taking the advice of Jesus literally, thought it was necessary to provide themselves with deadly weapons, whereas there was question only of moral force. And they innocently replied that they had

[7] *Isaias* liii, 12.

two swords at His disposal. "It is enough," [8] said Jesus. At that moment His thoughts were elsewhere.

[8] The Master may have uttered the words: "It is enough!" in a tone of irony. He saw only too well the uselessness of material swords in the hands of cowards who would be eager only to fly. He may, on the other hand, have said: "It is enough!" as one gives an evasive answer to children while waiting for events to explain more clearly what they have not understood.

CHAPTER V

THE INSTITUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE LAST WORD OF DIVINE LOVE—THE BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND THE WINE—THE REAL PRESENCE AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION—LUTHER AND CALVIN—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH—THE EUCHARIST, SACRAMENT AND SACRIFICE. (St. Matthew xxvi, 26–29; St. Mark xiv, 22–25; St. Luke xxii, 19–20; I Cor. xi, 23–25.)[1]

GOD'S love for man has taken inconceivable flights of generosity. The Cross, that divine folly, was, it seemed, to be its supreme expression. But by an ineffable prodigy, Jesus imagined and realised, at the last hour, something more surpassing still, if one may so speak, namely, the Eucharist. To give Himself once as a ransom for all men, seemed but little to His tender love. He determined

[1] One of the most surprising things in St. John is his silence concerning the institution of the Holy Eucharist. We cannot explain it by saying that the fourth Gospel is simply meant to complete the Synoptics. Many things are found in it which it has repeated after them, especially in the history of the Saviour's last moments, the importance of which was in no way comparable with that of the great fact which is the subject of this chapter. Not only does St. John omit the institution of the Eucharist in the long account of the discourses of the Last Supper, but he does not even leave room for it to be inserted. And yet one feels that all these admirable considerations by Jesus concerning the union of men with God through Him the Christ, and with each other through charity are only a sublime commentary on the Eucharist itself. The Sacrament was the working out or the physical realisation of the doctrine.

On the other hand, and this is what makes this anomaly stranger still, it cannot be denied that at the time when the fourth Gospel was written, the ceremony of the Sacred Banquet was the most generally practised and best

to give Himself to all in a permanent way and to become the real nourishment of famished humanity. It may be said of the Eucharistic communion as it was written of the Incarnation: "All wise, all powerful, all rich as God was, He could imagine, realise, or give, nothing more wonderful than this sacrament."

They had come to the close of the supper; with the remains of the Paschal lamb were vanishing the last signs of the ancient covenant. Jesus was awaiting this moment for the institution of the Testament of the future.[2]

Perhaps the last cup that was to close the banquet had been already poured out. Some still continued to eat,[3] the

known of all the rites in the infant Church, and the opponents of the authenticity of the fourth Gospel are no less troubled than we in explaining this silence. It would be even more inexplicable in the work of an impostor otherwise clever and intelligent, than in that of an Apostle.

This singular omission ought to make exegetes less ready to be scandalised by the silence of one or another Evangelist concerning facts, otherwise important, related by the others. Bossuet's saying is always a good lesson of wisdom: "One citation is worth more than a hundred omissions."

[2] We have a fourfold account of the institution of the Eucharist, for to the Synoptics is joined St. Paul in his first *Epistle to the Corinthians* xi, 23. These four accounts, although containing slight differences of expression, present, none the less, in luminous characters, unassailable for exactitude and splendid simplicity, the same idea and the same formula.

St. Matthew's and St. Mark's accounts are almost identical. St. Mark suppresses one word in the command to eat the bread: "Take ye," he says, "this is my body." St. Matthew has: "Take ye, and eat," etc. Likewise, instead of giving the command to drink the blood: "Drink ye all of this," he simply says that they all drank of it. Again, he omits the last words of Jesus: "unto remission of sins." St. Luke and St. Paul, who form a group quite distinct from the first two Synoptics, have preserved an almost verbal identity in their accounts. They add to the other two some important words: "This is My Body which is given (according to St. Luke), bruised (according to St. Paul), for you." They would seem also to put between the consecration of the bread and that of the wine, an interval which disappears in the other two accounts, for, as they say, it is after supper that Jesus presented the chalice, *μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι*. In them again it is more explicitly stated that the Saviour's blood is the *New Testament*. Finally, they add, after the consecration of the bread: "This do for the commemoration of Me." After that of the wine, St. Paul alone repeats this recommendation.

[3] In this is the explanation of the apparent divergence between St. Matthew and St. Mark, who say: they were still eating, *ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν*, and St.

others, having finished, were contemplating the Master, Whose sad air of resignation seemed to crown Him with the halo of a victim. He no longer spoke. Suddenly His eye kindles, in His attitude there is a majesty greater yet than when He gave His command to the waves on the sea of Galilee, or to death before the tomb of Lazarus. He holds in His hands a piece of unleavened bread, which He has taken from the table, His eyes are lifted up to heaven, He gives thanks and blesses at the same time.[4] In an outburst of love and gratitude for the miracle which He is about to perform, His soul has mounted up to God, whence it comes down again to this bread whose substance is going to be changed. By a movement of superior energy, He prepares and disposes it for the sacramental words that are about to destroy its substance in order to put another in its place. "*TAKE YE, AND EAT*," He then says, in solemn tones; "*THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH SHALL BE DELIVERED AND GIVEN FOR YOU.*" Then taking the cup of wine which, in the order of the Paschal rite, was to be the cup of thanksgiving, by an act of His omnipotence, again, He transforms its contents: "*TAKE AND DRINK YE ALL OF THIS, FOR THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS.*"

These words are in themselves as simple as God's creative act, the *fiat lux*, the *appareat arida*, and their simplicity rejects every explanation which, ceasing to be literal, is not founded on the direct sense of the words, however

Luke and St. Paul saying that it was after the supper. In the last two, in fact, not only the wine, but also probably the bread, according to some, was consecrated after the supper. The expression ὡσαύτως presents the μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι as referring to both consecrations.

[4] This is what the Evangelists mean in employing the two participles εὐλογήσας and εὐχαριστήσας.

surprising the latter may be in the light of reason. The Catholic Church has always understood that at that moment the bread, ceasing to be bread, was replaced by the Body of Jesus, and that the wine was changed into His Blood. Both, necessarily united with His soul and His divinity, remained hidden, it is true, beneath the species or appearances of the substance which they had replaced; but, though covered with a pious and reassuring veil, the incredible prodigy was none the less certain. Its very strangeness ought to be another proof of its reality, for, after all, we cannot admit that the Apostles did not seek at first, as others have done since, to assign a figurative sense to the Master's words; and if they interpreted them literally, enforcing in the first generation the Christian idea of the Real Presence as we possess it to-day, it was certainly only after having asked and obtained, for their own sake, from Jesus' own lips, fresh and categorical statements. They were inclined no more than we to blind belief, and, like us, they formulated objections.

The testimony of primitive tradition ought, therefore, to be of decisive importance in discussing and proving the reality and the mode of the Real Presence. We know with what splendid success Catholic doctors have put it in evidence.[5]

Luther acknowledged at an early date that it could not be avoided, and he resigned himself to it, not, however, without modifying the ordinary teaching of the Church sufficiently to cut himself off, even in this, from the Catholic faith. His idea was that the words of the consecration left unchanged not only the appearances, but also even the substance of the bread and wine, and that the

[5] Cf. *La Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Église Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie*, 4 vol. in 4°, Paris, 1704, and its defence by Renaudot.

body of Jesus was contained in them, just as His divinity was imprisoned in our nature by the Incarnation. His error arose from incomplete philosophical notions on substance and accidents.

The Calvinist system, more radical, affirmed that the Eucharist was only a symbol, efficacious, it is true, not by itself, but by the memory it recalls. According to the defenders of this doctrine, we eat the body of Jesus Christ, and drink His blood, not with our mouths, but by faith. Without admitting the Real Presence, they talk, nevertheless, of a real eating of the substance of the body. The faith of the communicant derives a radiance or communication from this body, glorious in heaven, just as the movement of our eye draws into us, by the rays it receives, the sun, which, however, remains whole and entire, never lessened by the many eyes that demand its light. As we give the name sun to these simple rays, so the special virtue that comes from the Saviour's body may be called His body.

Both Lutherans and Calvinists have failed to understand the Eucharist, the former assigning to it too much, the latter too little. What has a believer to do with the substance of the bread or of the wine in this august Sacrament? It is God that he seeks, and anything other than God is to him useless. That is why Jesus says, not: "*Here* is my body," but "*This* is my body." The bread, therefore, is no longer in question. One clear, precise word categorically excludes it. The material substance is destroyed, consumed, so to say, by the divine presence. In the hands of the priest there can be nothing real but Jesus Christ, with appearances to veil Him; and Luther imagined a union of substances as whimsical as it was foreign to the teaching of the Fathers and of tradition. On the other hand, Calvin, unwilling to acknowledge in the Eu-

charist more than a symbol especially efficacious in renewing the thought, or, even, the presence of Jesus Christ, destroyed the supreme and unique importance of the Sacrament. For, although the Eucharist may recall the Master's last supper, and although the bread, with its whiteness, broken in the pontiff's hands, may represent His body blanched by death and bruised for us, and although the wine may be the image of His blood poured out for our crimes, it is evident that our faith would find in the Cross, for example, a more significant symbol of our redemption. The tree of salvation, bearing on its branches the fruit that redeems, would be more apt than a small bit of bread or a cup of wine to call up within us the memory, the spiritual presence, and the life of the Saviour. No, the supernatural phenomenon that Jesus Christ wished to produce in the Eucharist cannot be a mere relation of ideas or an approach in spirit; otherwise, the emblem that He chose would have been neither the most natural nor the most eloquent. It was, then, a living Reality that He meant to create, and, according to His promise after the multiplication of loaves in the desert, He constituted Himself truly and substantially our food.

Why not acknowledge that He could do it, and that through love He has done it? Where is the man, who, at the hour of death, does not feel the desire to live on, at least in figure, with those whom he has loved? To perpetuate himself in the midst of his people or of his family, he bids the artist cut the marble or the bronze, to enliven the canvas with the most vivid colours. With delicate attention he distributes to his friends that which has touched his body, which has served him in the needs of life, which has been a part of himself. To those whom he loves the most he leaves his mortal remains, or, better still, his heart, the

organ that was the first to live and the last to die. Obeying in all this the voice of nature, he has but one regret, that he cannot leave himself wholly, full of life and reality, to those who have loved him. Jesus' soul experienced this same need, for it was full of the tenderest and most generous love. But, whereas our affection, in the presence of death, finds nothing comparable with the energy of its desires, except the sense of its helplessness, the Saviour had in the service of His great love a power without limit. Love had but to speak, and omnipotence did the rest. Jesus has, therefore, given Himself to the Church as a memory, but as a living memory, or, rather, as a continued existence, as Man, as Victim, as God. It is His entire Self that we possess in the Eucharist. Human reason has no right to complain if it fails to understand the manner of this prodigy, for human reason is still ignorant of the definitive sense of the words it employs in formulating its objections. So long as the philosophic schools fail to unite on identical and generally accepted definitions of substance, of matter, of accidents, of space, our proud mind must first attain to harmony with itself before deciding that it is at odds with the works of the Almighty. In brief, there is one thing that will always be clearer than any difficulty, namely, the simplicity of the divine words: "*This is My body; this is My blood.*" They go without comment, expressing what they mean and nothing more.

The consecration of the chalice is the symbolical complement of the consecration of the bread. In giving Himself for all ages, Jesus means to commemorate His bloody and heroic offering on Calvary. Hence the two substances which denote the spiritual food set before His disciples represent, at the same time, the violent separation of the blood from the body on the Cross. The bread and the

wine are at once the symbol of perfect nourishment as food and drink, and the memorial of the most generous of sacrifices in their mystical division. The Catholic Church alone has grasped the full depth of the Master's thought, in affirming that the Eucharist perpetuates, in time, the bloody sacrifice of the Cross. Not that it is a mere representation; this would not be saying enough; nor a mere renewal; that would be saying too much, since there can be nothing bloody where the victim, glorified by death, is henceforth invulnerable and impassible; but we must understand that the Eucharist is the pacific and loving extension of the sacrifice of the Cross. The ray of light does not destroy the star that sends it forth; it presupposes it as its principle and cause. In proclaiming the reality of the Eucharistic sacrifice, we do not deny to that of the Cross its expiatory power; for we declare, with the Apostle, that Jesus Christ offered Himself but once for the sins of all, and that, in one only oblation, He has secured forever the justification of the elect.[6] We mean to say only that the merits of this complete and unique expiation of Calvary where, *all being consummated*, Jesus Himself proclaims that nothing is wanting, are applied to us by the Sacrifice of the Altar. The contest that Luther stirred up on this point was vainer than is commonly supposed. Between his and the Church's manner of explaining justification there was only a difference of degree. For, according to him, man, in order to be justified, needed faith as the instrument that would give him a share in the redemption of Jesus Christ. Whether a man be justified exteriorly by imputation, or interiorly by application of the Saviour's merits, there is, first of all, required a means of attaining and of appropriating, in

[6] *Hebrews* x, 10–14; compare ix, 28.

different degrees, this grace of regeneration offered to mankind. The Protestants accept not only faith, but sacraments which are a sign and warrant of justification. In this, they no more destroy the Apostle's beautiful theory of the expiatory omnipotence of the Cross, than we ourselves in admitting the Sacrifice of the Mass. The great theological idea of Christianity is Jesus Christ perpetuating His life in the midst of mankind by a real, immediate, and personal influence in the Church. In her, and through her, it is He alone Who continues to teach; it is He alone Who blesses, consecrates, absolves, or condemns, as He did during His mortal life; it is He alone Who ascends the altar as He did on Calvary to offer the holocaust of expiation, of thanksgiving, or of propitiation; for, although until His day, there had been a succession of pontiffs, each of them dethroned in turn by death, Jesus, according to the beautiful doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews,[7] inaugurated the one indefectible and everlasting priesthood.

What absurdity is there in maintaining that this Mediator, always living and indefatigable,[8] is pleased to intercede for us under a Symbol that recalls the great and decisive mediation of the Cross? He can never again be put to death; but He can seem to be, and this is the meaning of this separation made by the priest's words, as by a sword, placing the body on one side, and on the other, the blood, the one bruised, the other shed for us. Thus the immolation continues under a form, not bloody, but mystical, and with a reality that obliges one to see in the Eucharist the renewal, or better, the extension and permanent application of the sacrifice of the Cross. The very act by which Jesus, glorious in heaven, accommodates Him-

[7] *Hebrews* vii, 23. [8] Ibid., 25.

self to a sacramental state commemorating His expiatory death, constitutes the essence of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. For on the altar He finds something that recalls His humbled and suppliant attitude on Calvary, and He again becomes a Victim, not for the sake of gaining us a right to be forgiven—He gained that long ago—but to facilitate our participation in this pardon, by continuing to intercede for us, and by giving Himself to be a warrant as well as a means of reconciliation, to the soul that is athirst for God.

Thus was to be accomplished the prophecy of Malachias,[9] announcing that in place of all the sacrifices of Mosaism, which were to be abrogated thenceforward and forever, a Sacrifice[10] without blemish would be immolated in every place and offered in Jehovah's honour, while His Name was to be glorified as never before to the very extremities of the world. This Sacrifice recalled, too, the oblation of Melchisedech, who, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews,[11] interpreting a passage in the Psalms, was a figure of Our Lord. The bread and the wine were present as the elements of the sacrifice that characterised the exceptional priesthood of the King of Salem. And, last of all, it was substituted for the immolation of the Paschal lamb, and was the solemn seal of the compact of the New Covenant.

This is what the Master's words indicated, when, presenting the cup of communion, He said: "This is the chalice, the New Testament in My blood, which shall be

[9] *Malachias* i, 10–11.

[10] The Hebrew word *minehah* expresses the oblation of a solid or liquid substance, flour, oil, incense, etc., which would exclude the interpretation which makes it a metaphorical sacrifice of prayers and good works, if it were not evident, besides, that a sacrifice of this kind would not be new, and would not replace all the Judaical sacrifices of which it was itself an integral part.

[11] *Hebrews*, iii.

shed for you." [12] And then, giving a command which implied a power granted simultaneously, He added: "Do this, for a commemoration of Me." [13] The Apostles took this precious testament,[14] and we see them at times themselves offering up the Eucharistic sacrifice,[15] at times drawing a parallel between the table and the altar of the Christians and the table and the altar of the pagans,[16] that is, between the sacrifice of the former and that of the latter. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews unhesitatingly declares that the Church has her *altar* whereon the victim is immolated, of which the Jews, the servants of the abrogated law, may not participate.[17] The faithful unanimously acknowledge that they have priests, pontiffs, and can we conceive of pontiffs without sacrifices to offer? [18] Finally, altars are everywhere erected for immolating the victim; to tell the truth, these altars are tables, as Calvin observes, but that is precisely another

[12] For, it has remained in the Church as the permanent symbol of the New Covenant which God made with man. God offers the gratuitous gift of salvation. Man accepts it in his faith and repentance; he puts the divine cup to his lips, and the blood once more seals the Covenant between the creature and the Creator.

[13] As we have already remarked, the first two Synoptics do not give this very important saying, which gives to the Apostles and their successors the right to do what Jesus Himself had just accomplished and instituted. St. Luke and St. Paul have preserved it to us. It is needless to say that, even if their testimony had been wanting, the place assured to the Holy Eucharist from the beginning in the Apostolic liturgy would have been more than sufficient to attest the command of the Master for the preservation in the Church of the sacrament which was to nourish its life.

[14] The priest, in consecrating, only lends his lips to Jesus Christ Who speaks. He is but an instrument employed by the Master to repeat the consecrating act of the Last Supper. This explains how the priest receives communion as well as the faithful. It belonged to Jesus alone not to receive communion because He alone had no need of being united to Himself. He was as the mother nourishing her children with her milk and not partaking thereof herself.

[15] *Acts* xiii, 2; λειτουργούντων signifies the sacrificial act.

[16] I *Cor.* x, 18.

[17] *Hebrews* xiii, 10. He employs the very word θυσιαστήριον.

[18] *Hebrews*, viii.

proof that there is a victim offered, since it is to be consumed there. When Protestantism denied the reality of the Eucharistic sacrifice, it began by declaring that all the Fathers of the Church were mistaken, and we know what conclusion to draw from such an avowal. Unsuspectingly, it has done more, for it has ignored the real, living, powerful centre of the whole Church. For we may reply, in the words of St. Jerome to the deacon Lucifer: "Without a priest there is no Eucharist, and without the Eucharist no Church."

The most important event of that evening had just occurred with a simplicity that heightened its grandeur. Never in the Master's life had He suffered His divinity to be seen so near at hand. If the idea that He was going to offer Himself as a Victim for the world was now no longer a human idea, it must be granted that the project of inviting mankind in all ages to receive nourishment from Him in order to insure their redemption was even less so. With a clearness of view that surprises even non-believers, He looked upon Himself as the ransom offered and accepted on the Cross, and now, through the Eucharist, holding this Cross upright in the world, He cried out to all mankind: "If thou wilt be delivered, saved, eat, take thy ransom!" For it is most remarkable that Jesus did not place Himself on the altar to be adored, although He is there absolutely adorable, but to be eaten. To think of thus keeping the Redemption by sacrifice at the disposal of all who would eat the Victim, and to see future generations eating and drinking this Redemption in His flesh and in His blood, belonged to a God, or else our reason is no longer able to distinguish earth from sky, light from darkness, the finite from the infinite.

Having left to His own this living and divine memorial, this means of salvation, this pledge of the Covenant, Jesus

had nothing further to do but to speak His last farewell. He began to do so in the most sublime language ever heard by human ears. It has been said of St. John, who has preserved us these, the Master's last utterances, that he was like the high priest throwing open before us the Holy of Holies and revealing God in all His majesty.

CHAPTER VI

FIRST FAREWELL DISCOURSE

WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT—THE APOSTLES UNITED TO JESUS—THE ELECT—JESUS THE WAY—BUILDERS OF THE CHURCH — MIRACULOUS POWERS — THE HOLY GHOST AS COMFORTER—THE CONSOLATIONS OF GOD. (St. John xiv, 1–31.)[1]

THE ancient Passover had been brought to a close and the new Passover piously inaugurated. The Apostles, filled with the sweet sentiments of their union with God through the Master, were in the ecstatic attitude of men initiated into a new joy, a new life. Jesus was well aware that this calm would not last, and His thoughts were fixed more deeply than ever on the events of the following hour.

"Let not your heart be troubled," said He, with the peaceful authority of a father encouraging his children. Not that He would condemn them to preserve a stoical indifference at the sight of woes that trouble even Himself; He desired only that their sadness might not degenerate either into discouragement or into distrust after so many divine promises. Satan generally employs the trouble of the heart to foster the growth of unbelief and despair. "Ye believe in God," Jesus continues, "believe also in

[1] The Synoptics, for the very reason that they are the result of the oral preaching of the Gospel, contain none of these discourses, much too transcendant, as they are, to be commonly preached to the first assemblages of Christians. In St. John, these wonderful pages are the echo of the faithful memories which his loving and Hebrew soul had preserved by the most pious meditations.

Me." The Father and the Son are one. The power of the One is the power of the Other. Hence, whatever humiliations He may accept, the Son will always have the strength to sustain His own and to save them. Let His own then remain closely united with Him, after His death, as well as during His life. They have powerful motives for so doing. With an accent of tenderness no less impressive than the loftiness of His thought, Jesus is pleased to name them. They are destined for heaven, and He is the sole way that leads thereto. They are to establish the Church here below, and He is the force that will insure their success by according to their suppliant faith the power of miracles and the assistance of the Holy Ghost. They look for consolation, and He alone can give it; for if they remain attached to Him, even from this moment on, the life of God will become their life. The development of these three ideas is of incomparable beauty.

"In My Father's house," says Jesus, "there are many mansions. If not, I would have told you, because I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will take you to Myself, that where I am, ye also may be." The thought of heaven is the most consoling to evoke in time of trial. The sufferings of this life appear slight, indeed, when we consider the rewards of the future life. We willingly struggle for a day in order to gain rest in an eternal victory. So it is with complacency that Jesus speaks of this, His Father's house in which, as in an immense palace, there is an apartment for each of the king's sons, however numerous the family. Heaven, therefore, is not merely a state, it is also a place. Where is this place? [2] The

[2] Those who seek it in the planets and fixed stars ought to have other reasons than a supposed gesture of Our Lord. At this moment He could not have pointed to the stars above His head, for He was still in the banquet-hall.

response to this question has not been granted to human curiosity. It is certain, however, that any place where God may be pleased to communicate Himself in the intuitive vision, in perfect love and complete possession, must be called heaven. Although He says nothing of the nature or of the site of the celestial mansions, Jesus is unwilling that His disciples should doubt their reality. With simple tenderness, He takes pains to observe to them that, if heaven did not exist, He would not deceive them by speaking of the thrones that await them and that He is going to prepare for them. This preparation consists in His expiatory death, which forces divine Justice to open heaven to redeemed mankind, and in the inauguration of the eternal triumph, by the Head of that same mankind.

It is not enough for the Master to have prepared the place, He will come Himself to look for His own and to introduce them into the fatherland of which He has achieved the conquest. And it is not His solemn coming at the end of time that is spoken of here; His promise refers to something more immediate. It gives us the assurance that at our last hour we shall behold the sweet sight of Jesus, coming to take us by the hand to lead us to His Father. At the bedside of the wicked, the Saviour will rise up like a painful memory, a shadow to be feared; over the bedside of the just, He will bend like a consoling friend, and following the example of St. Stephen, the first martyr,[3] the faithful soul will welcome in Him the realisation of his hopes and the object of his love.

"And," continues Jesus, "whither I go you know, and the way you know." The disciples did know, in fact, the way that leads to eternal life. The Master had not ne-

[3] *Acts* vii, 55.

glected to tell them repeatedly that to believe in Him was to have eternal life, and that to accept His words was to share in that life, and that since He Himself was the Resurrection and the Life, whosoever had faith in Him could never die. They were, therefore, on this road to heaven, since they believed in Jesus Christ. But their sagacity or their religious intuition had no suspicion that it was this very marvel that constituted their supernatural life.[4] This explains why Thomas, speaking in the name of all, exclaimed: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way?" And Jesus, with admirable authority and majesty, replied: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by Me." Thus with one word He overturns all the systems that seek salvation outside of Him. Whether religions of antiquity or the most elaborate theories of modern philosophy, all are excluded; there is only one means of salvation; it is He. He is the way or the road, because He unites heaven with earth. No man can pass the abyss that separates these two extremes but by crossing this bridge, the marvellous work of divine wisdom and mercy. To enter upon this road is nothing else than to enter into Jesus Christ Himself by faith and love and works. Hence, and because He is the Way, He is also the Truth, which we must make our own by assimilation. And this Truth, in so much as it is offered us, is likewise the Life destined to transform the soul that receives it. So that these three terms: Way, Truth, and Life, are each implied in the other; and Jesus, the true Saviour, is alone the perfect and mystical realisation of each of them. Since by entering into Him one meets with divine truth, and by having the truth he possesses life, we must compare Jesus not only to a

[4] "Sciebant discipuli, sed scire nesciebant," says St. Augustine.

road that conducts, but to a road that bears one whither he is to go, like the river that marks out the way for the traveller, and at the same time carries him along upon its moving flood.

In our Lord's discourses, ordinarily, the thought rises step by step. Here it reaches at a bound the most transcendent spheres of theology. "If ye had known Me," He says, and thus He means to prove the definition He has given of Himself, "ye would without doubt have known My Father also." In reality the Son is but the extension of the Father, and hence the direct way that leads to Him. If by seeing Jesus one sees the radiance of the Father, by uniting one's self to Him one attains and possesses the Father Himself. Therefore He is not only the way that leads to the Father, but the sanctuary, the mirror, the manifest image of the Father. "And from henceforth ye shall know Him, and ye have seen Him." Philip, who does not follow the line of argument very well, here speaks out, and proposes simply that Jesus shall put an end to their uncertainty by a miraculous manifestation that will satisfy the desires of all: "Lord," says he, "show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Only half appreciating the Master's explanation, he supposes that the others are in a like case. He would prefer something positive, an apparition of the Father in the air, a striking incident, confirming the faith of them all, as if the divine essence were omnipotence, and not truth and goodness. He was far from suspecting that it was through a human existence that God was to reveal Himself to men, and that, in reality, the Incarnation has attained that end. By the mouth of Jesus God has caused His truth to be spoken; in His soul He has shown forth His holiness, and in His works He has proved His goodness. It is not *by the side* of Jesus that one should desire to see the Father, but *in*

Jesus. The Son is become Man in order to make the Father visible to all mankind; and mankind, by the mouth of Philip, still asks to see God; is it not surprising? "So long a time have I been with you," cries Jesus, "and have ye not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou: Show us the Father? Do ye not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of Myself. But the Father Who abideth in me, He doth the works."

There is no page in the whole Gospel in which Jesus more clearly or more undeniably affirms His divinity. For the union between Him and the Father, of which He speaks here, cannot be a mere moral union. It is, indeed, in the divine essence that He means to say that He participates, and it is, in truth, the life of the Father that He, as Son, declares that He really and substantially reproduces. He speaks the Father's words, and thus lends Him His lips for speech; the Father, on the other hand, does the works of the Son and in this way lends the Son His power for action. They are indeed both intimately united in the Word, who is never separated from the Father any more than the Father can be separated from His image or His Son. "Believe ye not," Jesus goes on, "that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? Otherwise, believe for the very works' sake."

It follows from this first argument that, man being for God, and Jesus Christ being the point of union between God and man, man to attain his end, must remain united with Jesus Christ for the same reason that to reach the centre one must join with and follow the radius. Nor is this all. The Apostles have received the mission of founding the Church. Can they fulfil this superhuman task without the privilege of working miracles and with-

out the assistance of the Holy Spirit? But this twofold help shall come to them only from Jesus.

"Amen, amen, I say to you," He added, "he that believeth in Me" (that is, he who joins himself to Me by faith), "the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do. Because I go to the Father and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name that will I do." The Apostles and the believers of the succeeding ages had, in fact, the glory of achieving works of salvation superior to those that Jesus had done Himself. The Master's whole life, His miracles, His discourses, had had but one object, the religious transformation of mankind. But the object is always greater than the means. The foundation of the Church was destined to be an event greater than all that had preceded it. That could be accomplished only after the Saviour's death; when He should be raised up from the earth, He would draw all men to Himself, and this work of attracting mankind was to be the personal task of the Apostles. We know, in fact, that they extended the Kingdom of God farther than their Master did; and of all the prodigies they wrought this remained so much the most important, that the others which had been done in preparation for it were scarcely mentioned. Nevertheless the Master Himself must still be the real though not apparent agent of the transformation of the world. The Apostles shall accomplish their wonders only after having asked them in His name. Their prayer shall rise up to heaven, strengthened by the rights and merits of Jesus. The Father hearing in it the voice of His own Son, will bid His Son do what they desire. It is the Son's business to execute what the Father grants. Let the faithful pray for the spread of the Kingdom of God in the world, and the Son will lead the nations to the foot of the Cross to purify them beneath its influence. Let them ask

what response must be given to the objections of science and to the violence of tyrants, and the Son will speak from their lips. In a word, they shall be the channels that convey the fecundating waters, but He will be the spring that provides them. On the union of these channels with the spring will depend the efficiency of their Apostolate.

From this union, again, will come to them, as an element of life for the nascent Church, the assistance of a Paraclete, Advocate, and Comforter. "If ye love Me," said the Master, "keep My commandments,"—a moment ago it was the union of the mind by faith, now it is the union of the will by works;—"and I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete,[5] that He may abide with you forever, the Spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him; but ye shall know Him, because He shall abide with you and shall be in you." The Spirit of God comes only to those souls who desire Him, and they alone desire Him who know Him. On this account the world has no right to expect Him. The disciples, who for three years have beheld Him in Jesus, have Him before their eyes, and admire His divine works. They have only to persevere in their union with Jesus; and, in reward for their fidelity, the Holy Spirit will come to them as the powerful Advocate[6] Who shall speak for them in the great action brought against paganism, or again, as the Comforter, Who shall wipe away their tears, dress their wounds, and reawaken their

[5] Jesus is therefore a Paraclete, too, and there is no contradiction between the *Gospel* and the first *Epistle of St. John* ii, 1.

[6] The name *Paraclete*, given to the Holy Ghost, signifies *Comforter* according to some, and *Advocate* according to others. The difference in interpretation comes from the fact that some, like Origen and the majority of the Fathers of the Church read Παρακλήτωρ which taken in an active sense means *him who encourages, who consoles*; the latter read Παράκλητος and this word in the passive sense corresponds exactly with the *Advocatus* of the Latins. Demosthenes, Philo, etc., employ it in the latter sense.

courage. Jesus had offered the truth, the Spirit will implant it in souls, living, complete, efficacious. This is the most useful weapon He can provide for those who are to strive against error. At the same time His vivifying influence shall be exerted directly upon the world, already agitated by the preaching of the truth. As He caused Jesus to be born in the womb of Mary, so He will cause Him to be born again, but in another way, that is to say in a transformed humanity. For His mission shall be to introduce the divine life into souls in order to raise them up to the level of Jesus Christ.[7]

As a result, this mission of the Spirit shall consummate the union of the disciples with the Master, and through Him with the whole Trinity. This Jesus is about to explain, yielding Himself more and more to a sentiment of tenderness: "I will not leave you orphans," He says; "I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye shall see Me; because I live, and ye shall live." Inasmuch as the apparitions of Jesus after the Resurrection were only transitory and accorded to few, we cannot say that they were the fulfilment of this promise, which was made in a general way to the faithful of all ages and all lands. As for His coming on the Day of Judgment, that will be too late to console His orphaned disciples, and in circumstances which would make it inexact to say that the world shall not see Jesus, since all nations shall then be gathered together at the foot of His throne. It is, therefore, as the rest of the discourse will show, of a spiritual advent that He speaks. The manifestations of the risen Jesus shall prepare for it, and the coming of Christ the Judge shall bring it to its consummation. As risen Saviour He will reawaken and for-

[7] *Galat.* iv, 19; *Ephes.* iv, 13.

tify the disciples' faith, and create the current of supernatural life which He will thenceforth sustain by His intimate communications. As Judge He will bring all things to their appointed end, submitting the belief of some and the unbelief of others to His own merciful assize. The faithful shall have to seek and to see Him in the depths of their soul. While the world with its carnal eyes is unable to discern Him, the disciples, enlightened by the Holy Spirit will recognise Him without difficulty. In the beautiful words of St. Paul,[8] they shall contemplate His glory face to face, and in this contemplation they shall find the essential element of their supernatural life. Thus, beneath the rays of the sun which they admire, creatures receive the light and heat which are the indispensable conditions of their development.

"In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." In this spiritual manifestation of Jesus we shall ever find that His light is in proportion to the courage of our virtue. The vision of the Son shall reveal to us His intimate union with the Father, a substantial and eternal union on the side of His Godhead, a hypostatic, but no less real union on the side of His humanity. It will disclose to us at the same time the third link in this chain, namely ourselves, in its union with the First which is the Father, through the Second, as Intermediary, which is the Son. Thus we shall have the complete notion of the new religion, whose object is to unite the creature with the Creator by the sole Mediator Jesus Christ. Such is the great marvel which the Apostles shall discover for themselves on the coming day of enlightenment, and which they will repeat with such enthusiasm and love to a world astonished to find itself called

[8] *II Cor.* iii, 18.

to so lofty a destiny notwithstanding its wretched condition.

By his union with Jesus man possesses everything. Faith and works establish this union; love consummates it. "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." Man by his fidelity in retaining, and, above all, in practising the Evangelical law, establishes himself in most intimate relations with Jesus. Feeding upon His thoughts and living according to His will, he becomes His friend. For this reason, the Father loves him, no longer with a mere compassionate love, but with the love of the Father, since He sees in him the disciple, the image, the brother of His Son. Jesus, too, Who had loved him even before his fidelity, will cherish him yet more tenderly when He finds in him His own resemblance and the object of His Father's affection.

Such is the only theophany, or divine manifestation, that the disciples are to expect. Although it is not realised exteriorly, as Philip desired it a moment ago, it is none the less true and none the less wonderful.

The minds of some of the Apostles, however, are not much pleased at this. They were looking for a tangible fact. Was the Messianic plan changed? Judas, not the Iscariot, St. John observes, but Judas Thaddeus or Lebbæus, exclaims: "Lord, how is it, that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us and not to the world?" Jesus' only response is a repetition with still more explicit development of what He had already said: "If any one love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him." All heaven, then, will descend into the faithful soul to consummate there the most ineffable union. In the book of

the Apocalypse,[9] this consoling thought is found again expressed with special emphasis: "Behold, I stand at the gate and knock," Jesus says; "if any man shall hear My voice, and open to Me the door, I will come unto him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." The most intimate and most familiar relations are therefore established between God and the faithful soul. This union on earth is the presage and beginning of the union in heaven. "He that loveth Me not," continues the Master, alluding to the second part of the question asked by Judas and to the lot of those who are not to enjoy His manifestation, "keepeth not My words. And the word which you have heard is not Mine, but the Father's Who sent Me." This is the crime of the faithless world; unwilling to listen to His discourses, it scorns even the authority of the God Who dictates them, and therefore Jesus remains hidden to its eyes.

The understanding of the Apostles was no doubt far from being able to grasp such sublime teachings. But that which Jesus scarcely outlines to-day shall before long be taken up again by another Teacher, Who will make it easier to understand. "These things have I spoken to you, abiding with you. But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." Once more, let us remark in passing, the doctrine of the Trinity is here clearly set forth. For what are these Three Persons Who differ as well in the names They bear as in the parts They play? The Son has begun the religious formation of the new teachers by depositing the divine germ in unresponsive soil. The Father, at His request and in His

[9] *Apoc.* iii, 20.

honour, shall send the Spirit, Who will cultivate this seed, reanimate it, and make it fruitful. The work of the Paraclete, in striving to revive the words of Jesus in the memory of His disciples, and in indicating their exact sense to intellects henceforth illumined by His light, shall be decisive.

We know, in fact, with what wonderful energy this mission was fulfilled. From the beginning, the Holy Spirit preserved Christian dogma by means of Scripture and tradition; in the course of ages He developed it by infallible definitions in framing which He aided the Church. As Jesus was the Redeemer of mankind, so was He its Teacher. The Son created life; the Spirit distributed it. This perpetual assistance, promised to the Apostles, will be a guarantee against the weaknesses of their own minds and the vagaries of human reason; so that, in spite of obstacles of all sorts the heavenly Defender and Teacher will be present to make truth prevail.

Then, after a pause occasioned no doubt by one of the closing ceremonies of the meal, Jesus added: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth do I give unto you." In truth, there is nothing like it either in essence or in form. Whereas the peace of the world, an outward gift coming to us through the senses, is at all times deceitful and perishable like the vain things that constitute it, the peace of Jesus Christ is an altogether inward gift, true and lasting. Because it springs up from within, it casts a genuine serenity over even the most unhappy and most troubled life. Does not Jesus at the moment when He speaks, present the best proof of this? Is there anything more beautiful than the sight of a soul living in the most unalterable calm, because it feels itself strong in the sense of duty accomplished, in the thought of God Who loves it, and in its

hopes of the future? The world knows not this happiness. Hence, when, as a matter of propriety, it proclaims, proposes, or wishes peace, we know that its words have no other result than to prove a need of our heart which is easier to acknowledge than to satisfy. Jesus, on the contrary, offers it and really assures us of it, for, after having taught virtue, He provides the strength to practise it. But this alone can establish the soul in that tranquillity of order which constitutes true peace.

"Let not your heart be troubled," continues Jesus, returning to the first words of His discourse; "nor let it be afraid. Ye have heard that I said to you: I go away and I come unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would indeed be glad, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I." Painful, indeed, shall be the way by which He will go to His Father; and yet, He bids His own rejoice in His departure. What magnanimity! What heroism! How plainly divine He is!

The Arians were indeed poorly inspired in seeking in this passage a proof of the Son's inferiority to the Father. It is true that Jesus has just explicitly placed Himself below His Father, but He is not without a reason for so doing; for speaking as man, inasmuch as He refers to the eternal reward after death, He cannot but deem Himself inferior to God. Yet, if we look more closely, the very comparison which He establishes between Himself and His Father is a proof that, while yet a man, He knows that He is God. What man of wisdom would with composure say: God is greater than I? Can that which is naught be put in comparison with the Infinite? Every comparison supposes at least a similar term. In God, Who is pure Act, pre-eminently unmixed Being, there is but that one term, Being; and to be compared with Him one must have in himself the Being that constitutes divinity. Jesus

possesses it in virtue of the hypostatic union. It is for this reason that He is enabled to make a comparison. Were He only God, it would be difficult to understand how He might be less than the Father,[10] but He is also man, and as man He appears inferior. From His estate as God He descended to that of a slave; hence His joy in re-entering into His divine glory; not that His divinity was really changed into humanity in assuming human nature, any more than the humanity was changed into Godhead by its assumption by a divine Person; but just as the Godhead was intimately involved in the humiliations of the human nature, so that same human nature will be eternally associated with the glory of the Godhead. This consoling thought teaches the Apostles to look upon the death of the Just One not as an evil, but as the way that leads to rehabilitation and triumph.

"And now," says Jesus, "I have told you before it come to pass, that when it shall come to pass you may believe. I will not now speak many things with you; for the prince of this world cometh; and in Me he hath not anything. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given Me commandment, so do I. Arise, let us go hence." Owing to the fact of sin Satan has a kind of a right over sinners. To the just man he can do nothing, except when God permits it. Thus Jesus once more testifies to His perfect purity.

[10] Some of the greatest Fathers of the Church grant that even as God the Son could say He is less than the Father, not because He is in reality less than He, since they are One, but because the title of Son, begotten and living in the bosom of the Father, implies a sort of subordination. Yet, the Holy Doctors remark, this subordination does not constitute a real inferiority, for in virtue of the fact that He is the Son of God, He is the perfect representation of His Father, and this Son being neither made nor created, but begotten, He is as ancient as the Father, since there can be no Father without a Son. In this sense we may say that the Son is less than the Father, although in reality He is as great as He.

With an impressive tone of sincerity, He declares Himself exempt from sin, and consequently something more than a poor child of Adam. It is not for the expiation of His own fault that He is going to give Himself up, but for the effacement of ours. The Father has exacted this, and behold the Victim rises to go in search of the executioners. This is the final fulfilment of the *Ecce Venio*.

CHAPTER VII

SECOND FAREWELL DISCOURSE

THE VINE, THE BRANCHES AND THE HUSBANDMAN—UNION WITH JESUS—THE CONTINUATION OF THE MASTER'S WORK—THE WORLD AND THE APOSTLES—THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST—A PROFESSION OF FAITH. (St. John xv and xvi.)

AT the Master's invitation, the Apostles arose from table. Did they recite the end of the *Hallel*,[1] or did Jesus consider His own discourses the best hymn to chant to the glory of His Father and the most touching farewell to say to His friends? The Evangelist does not tell us, but he lets us see that the Apostles are slow in quitting the banquet-hall. It may be that they desired, as at the Transfiguration, to prolong these holy and sweet outpourings in which, with every thought and every emotion, the Master's tender soul appeared in all its beauty. It may be also that fear, affection, uncertainty as to what was about to happen, had rendered them motionless. Jesus Himself experiences some pain in breaking off such sweet intercourse.

As He sees them standing silent around Him, the memory of the Eucharistic mysteries which He has just instituted as a sign of union with them and the perspective

[1] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 30, and *St. Mark* xiv, 26, *καὶ ὑμνήσαντες ἐξῆλθον*, seem to say so, unless they refer to the magnificent discourses which are preserved by St. John, and which in reality constitute an incomparable hymn.

of the efforts the enemy is making to break the bonds which He has wished to make indissoluble, inspire Him to make one last recommendation. His blood offered under the appearance of wine, in order to transfuse His life into the veins of mankind, seems to Him to speak more loudly than all else of the part that He shall play in the new society. He seeks a figure with which to render immediately sensible and forever popular the idea that fills His mind. A vine which perhaps spread its vigorous branches along the terrace on which they stood on issuing from this upper room,[2] suggested the symbol which He sought. Such splendid vines are frequently seen on the terraces in Palestine. He said: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman."

We know that God had placed Israel in the midst of the nations as His chosen and privileged vineyard.[3] The golden vine that hung at the doors of the Temple restored by Herod,[4] was meant to remind the Jews of this. But this vineyard had degenerated, and God was angered more than once at its change, its barrenness, or the bitter fruits it bore.[5] It was for the Messiah, in Whom, according to Isaias,[6] the destiny and ideal of Israel were to be realised, to become the fruitful Vine bidden to cover the world with its branches and to nourish it with its life. If He is the true Light, compared with John the Baptist, who was only a passing gleam marking the approach of day; if He is the true Bread of Life, in comparison with the

[2] The recollection of the consecrated chalice may also have inspired Jesus to make this comparison. It is the only indication we can find in St. John of the mysterious act fulfilled by the institution of the Eucharist.

[3] *Psalm* lxxix, 8–19, in particular, shows us the vineyard which God takes out of Egypt, which He plants, after having removed the nations to make room for it, and which, after a surprising prosperity, is given over to even more astonishing devastation. See *Osee* x, 1; *Is.* v; *Ezech.* xix, 10.

[4] *Antiq.*, xv, 11; *B. J.*, v, 4.

[5] *Jer.* xi, 21; *Is.* v, 2.

[6] *Isaias* xlix, 3.

manna, which nourished but did not preserve from death; if He is the true and good Shepherd, before the false shepherds of Israel, He is even more the true Vine of the Lord in the midst of the nations. From His heart the sap shall flow to bear fruit upon the branches, that is, in the Church, the members of which shall be united to Him. By the novelty of the fine fruits which He will bear, He will attract the attention and make ready the transformation of non-believing peoples. The husbandman, who watches over the vineyard, is the Father. He devotes Himself to a twofold labour on the vine-stock, cutting off the dead branches and clipping from the fecund branches those useless twigs which might prevent the concentration of the sap in the grape and the full development of the fruit. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit," continues the Saviour, "He will take away; and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The similitude includes then only those souls already grafted on the Saviour by adherence to His doctrine, but whose dispositions are diverse. Some bear fruit and prove their communication with the divine stock by their faith which shines in their works. The Father is pleased to tend these with apparent harshness, for He does not hesitate to submit them to the cruel iron to prune, to clip, and to strengthen them. Trials of every sort are brought to bear upon them, until, loosed from all the useless things of life, they labour henceforth only to glorify God. The others cling to the trunk, but their sterile faith is a dead faith, and the Father, Who has long and sorrowfully beheld them overburdening the mystical Vine with their uselessness, allows them to fall off through heresy, unbelief, and death.

The Apostles are branches full of life and hope. Jesus encourages them with the information that the Father has

already applied to them His knowledge as husbandman: "Now you are clean," He says, "by reason of the word which I have spoken to you." For the divine word has penetrated their souls like a pointed sword, and has slain therein selfishness, indifference, and the other passions that were laying them waste. The operation, it is true, is not complete; this word will operate in these vigorous natures still more; and the sap, no longer running off in useless sprouts, will at last bloom forth on Pentecost day in rich, sweet fruits. For the present they have only to keep themselves strongly bound to the trunk by a lively faith. For, faith is the graft that holds them bound to Jesus Christ. It is the articulation that unites the member to the body and communicates to it its life. "Abide in Me," says the Master, "and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." The first condition of life and fecundity for the branch is union with the vine. So it is with man in his relations with the supernatural world. He can do nothing, if he is not in perpetual communication with the living sap that flows from Jesus, the divine trunk destined to bear all mankind. The insufficiency of our nature is clearly asserted here, and we see how powerless human virtues are, unless animated by the Redeemer's breath, for the production of fruits for eternal life.

However, this categorical affirmation of the necessity of grace does not imply the negation of liberty; and Jesus in giving the commandment to abide in Him, supposes one's power of separating himself from Him at will. So much so that by the side of this picture in which the

branch, voluntarily attached to the vine, multiplies its wonderful fruits, He places that in which the branch by an abuse of its free will detaches itself from the trunk that would give it life, and He puts side by side the happy lot of the one and the sad destiny of the other, that is, the determining of the merits of the good and of the demerits of the wicked. "If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth." It is a fatal exclusion leading to the furnace. The man who separates from Jesus Christ, separates from the Church, and as grace ceases to sustain his spiritual life, he withers, instead of spreading his vegetation in flowers and fruits. Death finally gathers him in his sterility, and Satan casts him into the fire, wherein he burns for eternity.[7]

How different the lot of the faithful soul! "If you abide in Me," says Jesus, "and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you. In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit and become My disciples." In this intimate union in which man and Jesus give themselves to each other, the former in his faith, the latter in His words, we have only to ask, and our desires shall be granted. The reason of this is that if, on the one hand, these desires, dictated by the love of God, are necessarily reasonable, on the other hand, received by the heart of Him Who shall have given Himself wholly for us, they cannot be rejected by His infinite benevolence. Whatever we may ask of Him shall always be unequal to that which He shall have already

[7] St. Augustine, *in Joan.* tr. lxxxi, has well said concerning this passage: "Ligna vitis tanto sunt contemptibiliora, si in vite non manserint, quanto gloriosiora, si manserint. Unum de duobus palmiti congruit, aut vitis, aut ignis. Si in vite non est, in igne erit; ut ergo in igne non sit, in vite sit."

given us. Then the branch will be covered with fruits, and by them the vine will glorify and rejoice the husbandman. Jesus, after His mortal life, will glorify the Father here below, not personally, but through His disciples, in whom He will cause His own virtues to blossom. Hence He will recognise the merits of those who shall have become the faithful channels of His own life. They shall be truly His friends, and, as it were, other Christs.

Can the Apostles decline so sublime a mission? "As the Father hath loved Me," He tells them, "I also have loved you. Abide in My love." For this love is most generous! We can understand why the Father should have loved His Son, Who was His image, the reflection of His beauty and of His thought; but what were the Apostles compared with Jesus? They possessed none of His perfections, and yet He has loved them as the Father has loved Him. The conclusion is that surrounded with this love, they must find their pleasure in it, and remain in it faithfully, as He remains in the love of His Father. "If you keep my commandments," He continues, "you shall abide in My love; as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love." In following the will of another we model our life on his life, we take as our rule the very thought that governs him, in a word we closely unite our soul with his soul, and consequently prove to him, in a most eloquent way, our whole affection. Jesus has proved His love for His Father by His absolute fidelity; it is for us to manifest ours for the Saviour by a similar fidelity. Therein is the source of perfect happiness.

For these recommendations of the Master insure felicity for him who hears them and makes them the law of his life. "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled." The joy that

Jesus derives from His perfect union with the Father is ineffable; that which He will communicate to His faithful, in the union He proposes to them, shall be no less unspeakable. It will flood man's heart with something infinite like God from Whom it proceeds. As He gave His peace a moment ago, so now the Master promises His joy. It is His joy because He feels it deeply. Experience has shown that the happiest souls have always been those who were the most closely united to the Saviour. They enjoy at the same time both the happiness that Jesus communicates to them by the delightful sense of His presence, and the satisfaction they give Him themselves by their attachment, their courage, and their generosity. So that this joy increases in proportion as our capacity for loving the Saviour and the certainty of being loved by Him are developed.

It is because charity is to insure the success of the Messianic work and the result of the Redemption that the Master repeats the divine precept in all its forms. After having exacted that we should attach ourselves to Him as He is attached to His Father, and that thus we should love the Father in Him, He bids us love men as He Himself has loved His disciples. Since He is the model and the source of charity in all its movements and all its forms, He has indeed the right to constitute Himself the legislator of charity.

"This is My commandment," [8] He says; "that you love one another as I have loved you." On this depends the life of the Church and the perfect development of the Christian spirit. In this the new religion shall be distinguished essentially from all human religions; by this she shall be enabled to defy every effort of the enemy;

[8] He says *My* commandment in the sense in which, shortly before, He had said: a *new* commandment.

by this she shall develop her full life and insure her final triumph. But it is from on high that He draws the example and the motive of this charity. As a prince who does not himself decline the obligations of His subjects, He begins by realising in Himself what He will impose upon others, and He grandly interprets, in His own life, the law which may surprise them. As He has loved us, we must love our fellows, and our charity must be as generous, as great as His. Now, He tells us what His own was, in order not only to define our duty, but especially to facilitate its fulfilment. With what delicacy, in fact, He reminds the disciples of what He has done for them, and, as a consequence, of what He has a right to demand of them! "Greater love than this," He says, "no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This general proposition plainly alludes to the heroic disposition of His heart. He knows very well and He hints that the great model of charity is Himself; for, in order to follow its flight, He will suffer Himself to be led to death. "You are My friends," He says, insisting on this word, which establishes the connection between His general proposition and the deductions He wishes to draw from it; "you are My friends, if you do the things that I command you. I will not now call you servants,[9] for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father,

[9] He had long before (*St. Luke* xii, 4) given them the title of friends, and He had always lived with them in the greatest intimacy, confiding to them the secrets of His destiny (*St. John* vi, 53; *St. Matt.* xvi, 21). But as shortly before (verse 20) He again called them servants, some have proposed to take οὐκέτι in the sense of οὐκ, which should frequently be translated *not so much*, and they render this passage thus: "I have not called you servants *so much* as friends." In this way they get rid of every difficulty, for Jesus declares that He has regarded them at once as servants and as friends. In any case, in His goodness He has not hesitated to accord them this latter title.

I have made known to you.[10] You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain, that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you." The force of the thought here seems to depend upon an anti-climax. The first charitable act of Jesus He has put last, and the last He states first. For He has begun by choosing the Twelve freely on His own initiative. He owed them nothing, and He has loved them so much that He has called them to the most glorious and most fruitful vocation. How great this first testimony of love! He has given to them the favour of being Apostles, to go and produce real and lasting good, and even to have through prayer God's power in their hands. His love did not confine itself to this. Although constituting them His messengers, His heralds, He could have kept them in legitimate lowliness before Him. The honour of being called to serve such a Master was already far beyond their deserts. And yet He has been pleased to make His Apostles His friends, living with them not in official relations but with the tenderest effusions of confidence. Finally through a love that surpasses all others, He will give up His life for them amid the most sorrowful circumstances. Yet this act chronologically the last, is logically the first, for it is in prevision of His expiatory death that His disciples have been found worthy of entering into intimacy with Him, and of fulfilling successfully the functions of the Apostolate. Thus the order that St. John follows is still rigorous, and, after His admirable digression, the Master has the right to conclude with a return to His point of departure:

[10] He means only all that their weakness could bear; for He will declare later (*St. Matt.* xvi. 21), that He had many other things to tell them, but that He leaves to the Holy Ghost the care of revealing these to them.

"These things I command you, that you love one another." [11]

By a natural transition, face to face with the Church which He is founding in the bonds of charity, He discerns the world, the society of hate which shall prove to be the implacable adversary of His work. The picture He is about to draw of its malice must, as well as all the rest, determine the faithful to keep themselves bound to each other in charity and, through Jesus Christ, attached to God in unshakable faith. The third portion of this discourse is, as it were, a confirmation of the first two.

"If the world hate you," He says, "know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If ye had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It is a consolation for persecuted Christians to think that they are suffering for their Master's cause, for it is the Master that the world is pursuing in them. They should be proud of bearing a resemblance to Him sufficiently remarkable to revive before the world His memory, His spirit, and His divine influence. Besides, if the world persecutes them, it is because they have ceased to be its partisans, and this is a sign of their holiness and true glory. For them to be favourably regarded by the world would be a strange anomaly; the members cannot be honoured when the head is cursed, and, moreover, the disciples are called to represent, in the midst of the world, ideas which are its condemnation. The world will hate them as deserters who have abandoned it to go over to Jesus Christ.

[11] It has been justly remarked that from the beginning, this last discourse proceeds in a series of sentences without a single connecting particle. This is remarkable in St. John, who ordinarily multiplies them. It may be explained quite naturally by the profound emotion which at this moment filled the soul of Jesus. Emotion utters its sentences disconnectedly like sobs.

"Remember My word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My word, they will keep yours also.[12] But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me." The world's hatred for the disciples shall have its origin in the world's hatred for Jesus Christ; but this latter itself shall find its cause in ingratitude to God; and as the crime of despising the Apostles is particularly great because they despise in them the Master Who sends them, so non-belief in Jesus Christ is the more culpable since it resolves itself finally into non-belief in God Himself. "If I had not come," He says, "and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." For they could have been not absolutely reprehensible, because they were living in ignorance; henceforth this pretext cannot be alleged for the truth has been authentically announced and proved to them. The evidence of the Messianic manifestation, which was proved by miracles, has brought God into the question, and every non-believer in the Gospel is become a non-believer even in God. "He that hateth Me," continues Jesus, "hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But that the word may be fulfilled which is written in their law: They have hated Me without cause." [13]

[12] The verb τηρεῖν, *to keep*, cannot be translated *to follow*, except ironically; for Jesus means that their words shall be no more respected or obeyed than His. The natural sense of the phrase must be, therefore, to show that their words will be despised. Hence we accept the verb τηρεῖν in the sense of *watching or spying maliciously* in order to attack, as if it were παρατηρεῖν. The Septuagint (*Gen.* iii, 15, and *Jer.* xx, 10) employs it in this same sense.

[13] Jesus alludes to *Psalms* xxxiv, 19, and lxviii, 5, where David, the imperfect Just One complains of the blind and unjust fury of his enemies.

Such then, is the malice of the world, the enemy of the Apostles, the enemy of Jesus Christ, and the enemy of God. But, however great it may be, this malice shall not triumph. To confront the sacrilegious uprising of non-belief there shall be a great and irresistible testimony of faith which shall strike down the wicked. "But when the Paraclete cometh, Whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me, and you shall give testimony because you are with Me from the beginning." The Spirit, therefore, is in the Father, like the Son, from all eternity; and as the latter proceeded from Him by the Incarnation, so the former will proceed from Him by His effusion. It is the Son that sends Him, as He Himself had been sent by the Father; and it is from this subordination in consubstantiality that the Catholic Church has legitimately concluded that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son as well as from the Father. Theological reasoning, moreover, clearly established this. The philosophical notion which we have of the Trinity shows us the Father begetting from all eternity His Thought or His Word; begetting Him, He loves Him with an infinite love, and the Word Himself naturally turns back towards the Father, Who is His Principle, to give Him a similar love; it is this very relation of love between the first Two Persons that constitutes the life and gives us the idea of the Third. But who does not see that this relation proceeds as much from the Son as from the Father, since it is constituted by the very current of the two loves? The Spirit is the bond which clings as closely to the Son as to the Father, and which comes forth from both simultaneously to unite them in His infinite Personality.

His thought goes further and applies this to the perfect Just One as the chief object of this malice on the part of Israel.

This Spirit, then, will be an authorised and eloquent witness. His word shall resound first of all in the hearts of the Apostles, whom He will enlighten and arm with all the powers of truth. But His voice shall reach the people, too; it shall overwhelm the world; it shall be a breath bringing back to life nations dead in error. The Apostles shall, indeed, give their personal testimony; for they have seen Jesus from the outset, and they are able to recount His works even without the aid of the Holy Ghost. But the efficacy of their words shall come, above all, from the resonance, the persuasive accent, the luminous clearness bestowed upon them by the Spirit. Thus these two testimonies, although distinct, shall be united in one.[14]

Strong in this promise which insures their triumph, they must never be discouraged or cast down, whatever happens. The final word shall be truth's and virtue's, and the impious, in spite of their violence, shall be crushed beneath the divine testimony. "These things," Jesus observes, "have I spoken to you, that you may not be scandalised. They will put you out of the synagogues; yea, the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth a service to God.[15] And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father nor Me." Nothing is worse than religious fanaticism; it is human passion claiming the authority of divine inspiration. What a misfortune it is to imagine one's self to be agreeable to

[14] We may also understand by this testimony of the Spirit, His influence which shall form new apostles by instructing the newly converted and giving them, together with the power of miracles, a gift of speech that none can resist. In this sense St. Peter will say later on (*Acts* v, 32): "And we are witnesses of these things, and the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to all that obey him."

[15] These words agree with a famous maxim of Jewish fanaticism: "Omnis effundens sanguinem improborum, æqualis est illi qui sacrificium facit." (*Bammidbar, Rabba, fol.* 329.) It is true that Moses had said to the Levites who had killed the idolaters (*Ex.* xxxii, 29): "Consecrastis manus vestras."

God in killing one's brethren! And yet this misfortune is possible, when one possesses neither truth nor charity, that is to say, when one does not exist beneath the rays of heavenly light. The example of Paul is a proof of it.[16]

"But these things I have told you, that when the hour shall come, you may remember that I told you of them." Hence, in the days of persecution, they must not think that Jesus has abandoned them to their enemies, and far less that He has deceived them. After the Master's prophecy, they shall find in the trials that await them the very reason of their faith, and in their faith the motive of their courage. "But I told you not these things[17] from the beginning," Jesus says, "because I was with you. And now I go to Him that sent Me." As long as He was with them He braved the tempest Himself for their sakes, and spared them its fury. Henceforward it shall not be so, and the Apostles must not be left in ignorance of the fact that evil days await them.

"And none of you," He says, resuming His encourag-

[16] *Acts* xxxi, 9; and *Galatians* i, 13 and 15.

[17] This assertion gives rise to some difficulty, for we have heard Jesus prophesying to His own the hatred of the world. (*St. Matt.* v, 10, *et seq.*; x, 16, 18.) Some have thought that ταῦτα, in the text of St. John, signified rather the future coming and work of the Holy Ghost than the persecutions. According to them the first ταῦτα, verse 1, signifies the hate that Jesus prophesies to the Apostles in order to prevent them from being scandalised; the second, verse 4, is a repetition of the first, and signifies the same thing; the third, which ought to be ἐκεῖνα, by a Hebraism St. John wrote ταῦτα, signifies the mission and the assistance of the Holy Ghost. He did not speak to them of these things before, because He Himself was with them, but now that He is about to leave them, He must encourage them by announcing the Comforter. Others, M. Godet among the number (*Comment. sur St. Jean*, vol. iii, p. 447), declare that St. Matthew, according to his custom, has gathered into the instructions given to the Twelve, all that He had said to them at different times, and they think that Jesus did not really speak to them of the trials that were in store for them, until the last moment. The explanations with which they, with St. Chrysostom, Euthymius and several modern critics, pretend to prove that Jesus announces here the trials of the Apostles in greater detail or in more lively colours, are not well founded. To be convinced of this, one has only to compare the texts.

ing promises, "asketh Me: Whither goest Thou?[18] But because I have spoken these things to you, sorrow hath filled your heart." Instead of seeing only pains and trials, they must look forward to the reward. After the woes of the present life, there is still something else. Why lose sight of this? The prospect of it dispels all sadness. Since the Cross had two sides, why stop to contemplate only that one which bruises the heart, and forget that one which consoles it? Jesus therefore reminds them that He is going into the glory of His Father.

"But I tell you the truth; it is expedient to you that I go. For, if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you." We have seen above the sense of these words, and why the departure of Jesus was to prepare the coming of the Holy Ghost. The reconciliation of man with God was made subordinate to the expiation on Calvary. But the Spirit could not come into those who were living in sin. Hence, according to St. Paul's[19] doctrine, Jesus had to make Himself cursed in order to procure for us the Holy Spirit. Logically, purification precedes adornment, but there was no purification possible except by the Redeemer's death. This then had to intervene as a first cause, and the coming of the Spirit follows as the fruit proceeds naturally from the grain of wheat that dies to give it life. Historically speaking, Jesus said to the Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," only after His passion and His resurrection.

[18] Peter had asked Him this question (*St. John* xiii, 36), and Thomas repeated it later on (*St. John* xiv, 5). But they did not ask it in the sense which Jesus desired. At any rate they do not take up the matter again with any eagerness to probe it to the bottom; they prefer to give themselves up to the mournful thoughts of persecution, heedless of the joys of future reward. The Master would have liked to perceive in their soul, at this sad moment of separation, less discouragement and a more eager desire to know the aftermath of the storm which was about to break.

[19] *Galatians* iii, 13, 14.

Obtained at the price of so great a sacrifice, the Spirit will indemnify the Saviour for His humiliations by the demonstration of His divinity and the consecration of His triumph on earth. "And when He is come," says Jesus, "He will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment." And He explains immediately the meaning and the extent of this victory: "Of sin, because they believed not in Me; and of justice, because I go to the Father, and you shall see Me no longer; and of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged." The influence of the Spirit shall consist in convincing men of the sin of the world, of the justice of Jesus Christ, and of the judgment of Satan. In analogous terms,[20] Jesus had depicted the result of His death on the Cross. Here He takes pains to have it understood that if His part consists in bearing away the triumph, the influence of the Spirit shall be to make it evident to all that this victory has been gained.

The sin of the world is its unbelief which, in view of Jesus' works was already inexcusable, but which, changing soon into homicidal hatred, shall be far more so when it shall have cursed and slain the Christ. Man puts his Saviour to death and crucifies the Son of God; is not that an unheard-of crime? The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of the Apostles, will severely reproach Judaism with this, and, convincing it of its crime, He will more than once succeed in making it understand the need of repentance.[21] There is, therefore, a difference between the action which the Spirit brings against the world and that which He brings against Satan. The world is convinced of its sin, and Satan of his judgment. Sin does not finally exclude penance and rehabilitation. Judgment is the consumma-

[20] *St. John* xii, 31, 32. [21] *Acts* ii, 22-25-36 and iii, 13-15.

tion of misfortune. In the course of the ages, the preachers of the Gospel shall be but the organs of the Holy Ghost, reproaching the world for its faithlessness and for the vices that are its inevitable consequence.

The justice of Jesus shall be established by His resurrection.[22] Men have condemned Him as guilty, God glorifies Him as just; the former have slain Him, the latter restores Him to life; and that there may be no doubt of His rehabilitation, even the body of the Victim shall be taken from the executioners. The triumph of the Just shall be complete. He shall return to His Father, and, being received into divine glory, man shall see Him no more. Shall mankind, thus convinced of having disowned heaven's Envoy, at last be tempted to bend the knee before Him Whom they have crucified, and to adore Him Whom they have cursed? The influence of the Holy Ghost shall, at least, impel them to this loyal and above all salutary retractation. As for the prince of darkness, the Spirit shall prove that he has been finally judged. Satan, struck powerless in his malice, beaten at the foot of the Cross, felled by his Victim Whose resurrection he cannot prevent, shall finally be hurled from his tyrannical power. The world shall have only to open its eyes to learn it. It is evident that hell's struggle with Jesus Christ shall be ended, the duel finished, and that, by a judgment without appeal, the wicked one shall be declared vanquished.

While He will convince the world of all this, the Holy Ghost will instruct the faithful and complete the Saviour's doctrinal work. "I have yet many things to say to you," the Master adds, "but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you

[22] Many have supposed that this might also mean the justice which Jesus' death shall place within the reach of all.

all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but what things soever He shall hear, He shall speak, and the things that are to come He shall show you." As Moses, about to leave the people of Israel, consoled them by designating Josue their new leader,[23] so Jesus declares to His faithful that the Spirit will lead them to the heart of religious truth. True, He Himself has given them the teachings they were capable of understanding, He has led them out of Egypt, and up from the desert by delivering them from the servitude and uncertainty of error; He has even insured for them the possession of the promised land; but they shall make their full entrance therein only under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. It is for Him to open up their understanding, to bring to full bloom that religious science of which they have received the germs, and to multiply their virtues. Under His influence Christian dogma and the moral law shall be fully promulgated, taught, accepted. Through Him, the new society shall receive its rule of faith uninfluenced by error or by human passions. He Himself shall guide the Church in the deductions to be drawn from the Master's teaching, and shall insure her infallibility. As Jesus Christ instructing mankind was simply the faithful echo, the trumpet of the Father, so the Spirit shall be the trumpet of the Father and of the Son. He lives in them, since proceeding from both one and the other, He is the knot of the divine life: can His language, then, be other than that of God Himself? He shall teach not only that which is, but also that which shall be; He shall inspire the doctors and the prophets. To the former He shall reveal the science of religion which they must defend, to the latter the secrets of the future which they must announce. We know the part the prophets

[23] *Deut.* xxxi, 23.

played in the primitive Church. That of the doctors has never ceased in the course of the ages. Thus the Holy Ghost shall glorify the Son by the completion of His work.

"He shall glorify Me," Jesus goes on, "because He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine; therefore, I said, He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it to you." The Father first has the truth in Himself, but the Son, Who is His thought, has it likewise and reflects it whole and entire. On the other hand, the Spirit, Who is the love of the Father and of the Son, also shares in this truth, and has it eternally from the Father and from the Son.[24]

Here the discourse seems to be interrupted. Jesus, on the point of leaving the terrace where He had probably paused, returns to the first thought of that hour, and adds these words: "A little while and now ye shall not see Me, and again a little while, and ye shall see Me, because I go to the Father." In this paradoxical form, the Master's words tended to awaken again the disciples' curiosity and to bring on a new explanation on a point which should be decisive with regard to their faith.

For at that moment, some of the disciples said to one another: "What is this that He saith to us: A little while and ye shall not see Me, and again a little while and ye shall see Me, and because I go to the Father?" And they added: "What is this that He saith, a little while? We know not what He speaketh." For a long time we have seen the Apostles embarrassed by such language on the part of the Master. His going to the Father at a time

[24] In a still more evident but less profound sense, Jesus can say that the Holy Ghost, in order to glorify Him, shall take what belongs to Him, because the Spirit shall, in fact, only take up His unfinished work, cultivate what He has sown, ripen what was His. But the other sense is the better one.

when, according to their notions, it was necessary to proceed to the conquest of the world, always seemed to them senseless, and His return from the journey to the Father was even less intelligible. Hence the questions they put to each other in a low voice. Jesus, knowing that they were desirous of questioning Him, anticipated them, saying: "Of this do you inquire among yourselves, because I said: A little while and you shall not see Me; and again a little while, and you shall see Me. Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice." It is the history of the morrow recounted the day before. When He shall have expired on the Cross, Satan, the world, the chief priests shall rejoice; the faithful, His disciples, His friends shall be deep in affliction and in tears; the former shall sing their victory, the latter shall deplore their seeming defeat.

However, this anxiety of the Apostles shall soon come to an end. "And you shall be made sorrowful," Jesus continues, "but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labour, hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. So also you now, indeed, have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you." The prophets had often employed the image of a woman giving a child to the world to depict sharp suffering;[25] Jesus makes use of it here to indicate especially the rapid transition from extreme sorrow to the most lively joy, and to show how much consolation there was in the words: "A little while," meant to denote the nearness of His rehabilitation, as they had marked the nearness of His ignominy. They shall see

[25] *Mich.* iv, 9–10; *Is.* xvi, 17; *Jer.* iv, 31; *Os.* xiii, 13.

Him suddenly annihilated, and suddenly glorified. If a woman rejoices saying that a man is born, the Apostles will rejoice much more proclaiming that Jesus is risen again; and their joy, inspired by the Master's triumph, will be as unfailing as that triumph itself.

"And in that day," says Jesus, "you shall not ask me anything." The great fact of the Resurrection and above all the coming of the Holy Ghost shall clear away all doubts, and bring to souls truth together with its evidence. Having God's truth, they shall dispose also of His power. At that time nothing shall be able to check their victory over the world, nor disturb their satisfaction as Apostles and as conquerors. "Amen, amen, I say to you: If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked anything in My name. Ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full." To ask efficaciously in Jesus' name, or rather to have Jesus ask by our lips, we must already have Jesus in our hearts. The Apostles had as yet asked nothing in Jesus' name, because they did not yet have Jesus living within them. It was reserved for the great prodigy of the Resurrection and the astounding manifestation of Pentecost to perfect their faith and thus to make them capable of speaking in His name. We speak the stronger in the name of another the more closely united we are with him, not so much by exterior and conventional signs, as by thoughts and affections. This union of heart and mind in the Apostles was to be the fruit of their faith tested on Calvary and for ever strengthened by the miraculous apparitions that followed the Resurrection.

"These things I have spoken to you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I will no more speak to you in proverbs, but will show you plainly of the Father." Jesus' language, although quite intelligible in itself, was obscure and mys-

terious to the Apostles. It was like a parable the transparent envelope of which they could not penetrate. A complete revolution shall be needed to unseal their blinded eyes, and this revolution shall be effected after the Resurrection. Then Jesus shall have only to draw their attention to the texts of Scripture in order to demonstrate to them their fulfilment and to reveal in this way the admirable economy of the new religion. This is what He calls speaking plainly of the Father, as if, behind this name of Father, was hidden the sum and substance of this religion.

Knowledge will then be fully given them, as well as power, through prayer. This is, under a somewhat different form and with more emphatic accentuation, a repetition of the preceding words: "In that day you shall ask in My name; and I say not to you, that I will ask the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God." Jesus' thought here is incompletely expressed. He means to say that His intercession, although continuing for ever in favour of His own, shall be no longer necessary, since they shall be recommended thenceforward by their perfect faith, and because without requiring the supplication of His Son, the Father will hear those whom He shall love as the living images of that Son. The Master's object is to give the highest idea of the merit of the soul that adheres to His divinity by an act of unreserved faith.

"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world," He says, again defining that which is to be the first object of this faith; "again I leave the world, and I go to the Father." These four propositions sum up the whole Christian religion. The Son comes forth from the Father and not from nothing like a mere creature, therefore He is God. He comes forth from Him through an

act of infinite mercy, for He leaves eternal glory in order to become man, and by His sufferings to restore mankind. Such are the first two phases of His life. They have their counter-balance in the last two. Jesus rises up from the earth together with the human nature which He there put on, and enters again into the bosom of the Father, Whom He had left, bringing with Him His conquest, which He glorifies by its deification. The words of St. Augustine express these admirable transformations: "*Deus factus est homo, ut homo fieret Deus.*" This is the sum of the Christian faith.

The Apostles, impressed by this clear and succinct summary of Jesus' past and of His future, surprised, too, at seeing Him divine their most secret thoughts, unite in speaking a profession of faith which is, as it were, their last word concerning the Master, and their homage done to the power of His words. "Behold, now Thou speakest plainly," they exclaim, "and speakest no proverb. Now we know that Thou knowest all things, and Thou needest not that any man should ask Thee. By this we believe that *Thou comest forth from God.*" This was as much as to say that for them there could be no longer any doubt that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. This was Peter's former profession of faith now become that of all, and summarising, with a clearness the more significant because of its tardiness, the thought of the Apostolic College concerning the Person of Jesus. The Master had desired to have this homage come from their lips previously to their defection. He shows how hard it was to draw it forth. "Do you now [26] believe?" He says.

[26] Ἄρτι, usually translated *just now* probably signifies *at last.* Jesus sees that He has led them to the point He desired, and He is about to render thanks to His Father (xvii, 8) in His sacerdotal prayer. The words which He adds immediately afterwards have, however, moved some exegetes to propose a different meaning. Alluding to their defection a little later on,

The victory is for Him the more consoling as it was the more laborious. He is overjoyed in perceiving around Him none but hearts that beat in unison with His. In a few moments He will solemnly give thanks to His Father.

From this moment the future seems to Him less discouraging. If fear disperses His friends, a same faith and a common love can reassemble them. This is the final consolation He wishes to leave them, as He declares that the terrible drama is beginning. The wicked are already arming their soldiers to seize upon Him. "Behold the hour cometh," He says, "and it is now come, that you shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world!" However great, then, the cowardice of the soldiers, the general shall be victor, and the fugitives, saved and reinstated by him, may join again in His victory.

Jesus said, according to them: "You believe now, but what will you do later on?" The hymn of thanksgiving which we shall now hear seems to forbid this interpretation.

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS' PRAYER

THE HIGH PRIEST OF THE NEW LAW—HIS GLORY—SANCTIFICATION IN THE TRUTH—CONSUMMATION IN GLORY. (St. John xvii.)

WHEN the soul is deeply impressed with sadness or love, it naturally turns to prayer. Jesus, at this moment, had only to open His lips, and there issued the most beautiful supplication that ever rose to heaven. This page of the Holy Books is incomparable. The High Priest of the New Law shows most conclusively, in His simple and sublime language, whether He was worthy of the supreme office of sacrifice which He was going to claim at the price of His blood.

He speaks aloud: for the Apostles must needs know what is still lacking in them and what He is going to merit for them. They must needs at last become acquainted with the intimate bonds that unite Him with the Father, and they must learn one day to pray themselves as He does.

His eyes are raised to heaven: one might say that His soul, in that look, mounts up to seek the Father's countenance, desirous of speaking more directly to His all-powerful mercy: "Father," He says, "the hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee; as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him." This

hour is the hour of His death, the immediate preparation for His glory. The Son asks the Father certainly to sustain Him in the struggle, but above all else to make His sepulchre glorious. Although His patient and magnanimous attitude, during His Passion, must of necessity glorify His Father, we must grant His prayer a wider scope. He certainly means to speak of His resurrection, of His return to glory, and of the introduction of His human nature into divine beatitude. The consequence of this supreme glorification will be to increase His power over the world which He will arouse more easily by His influence, and more surely lead back to truth and virtue. Is not this a part of the divine plan? Has not all power over all flesh been given to the Son, "to re-establish all things" in Him,[1] and by this demand does Jesus do more than comply with the Father's desires? He asks for divine life in glory in order to honour His Father by assuring men of eternal life through the light of truth. "Now this is eternal life," He says; "that they may know Thee, the only true God,[2]

[1] *Ephesians* i, 10.

[2] St. Augustine and several other Church Fathers have held that these words of Our Saviour should be read thus: "Eternal life consists in acknowledging Thee and Jesus Christ, Whom thou hast sent, as the only true God"; "ut te et quem misisti Jesum Christum cognoscant solum verum Deum." The text is read in this sense also by St. Ambrose, St. Hilary, St. Bede, St. Thomas, etc. Although it is difficult to quarrel with this exposition of the words, the general preference is to face the objection of the Arians and maintain the translation we have chosen, because it in no way follows from this that the Father is called the only true God to the exclusion of Jesus Christ. It is ordinarily observed, and this suggestion might suffice, that the Father is called the only true God with relation to the false divinities of paganism, and not with regard to Jesus Christ, Who is considered, in this passage, more as Mediator than as God. But, strictly speaking, we can indeed accept this assertion in its full force, and understand from the words: *only true God*, the prerogative of the Father, Who alone is not begotten, and Who is His own Sufficient Reason, whereas of the other Persons, One is begotten by the Father, and the Other proceeds from the Father and the Son. As He is the origin of two other Personalities as eternal and as perfect as His own, He appears to be, as it were, a kind of immense Reservoir of

and Jesus Christ,[3] Whom thou hast sent." It is, therefore, with the thought of making the Father known that He is occupied when He asks, on His own account and in preparation for others, for life in glory. Men shall not know God in heaven, if they have not known Him on earth. Heaven is but the religious life of earth transformed by eternity. The knowledge of the Father which Jesus wishes to give men shall be not only speculative, it shall become above all practical, appealing even more to the heart than to the mind, setting forth this Father as the only true God, in opposition to all those whom men, in the words of St. Paul,[4] have been pleased to call gods in heaven and on earth, and to all beings who, since they are not God, are in comparison with Him only so many illusions, vanities, and lies. The pure worship of

Divinity, and, in a sense easily understood, the only true God, God the pre-eminent. The two other Persons are no less God than He, as we have said elsewhere when expounding this bold explanation of certain Fathers of the Church. They are equally eternal, infinite, necessary, since the Father is Father only by virtue of having a Son, and the Father and the Son are to be understood as necessarily united by the eternal Love Which is the Spirit. But it is the Father, in reality, Who is the Source of Divinity, *fontana Deitas*, and from Him It passes in an infinite, eternal, necessary Effusion to the two other Persons. Hence Jesus does not hesitate, in this same sentence, to place the knowledge of Himself on the same degree of necessity as the knowledge of the only true God for the gaining of eternal life; St. John in his first *Epistle* v, 20, alluding no doubt to this passage, after having said that the Father is the true God Whom we must know, thanks to the special understanding which the Son has bestowed upon our souls, declares that this true Son of the Father is "the true God and life eternal."

[3] In this text the Master calls Himself by the name of Jesus Christ, because this name sums up all that we must know concerning the Mediator: the union of the two natures, the divine and the human, in the Person of the Son of God. Through a lack of critical acumen some have been suspicious of this manner of speech on the Saviour's lips, and have accused St. John of having forgotten himself in giving the Master's language a form that is absolutely inadmissible. But no other form could be better suited to the solemnity of the words that Jesus here utters. No longer mindful that He Himself is in question, He beholds only the Father and the Way that leads to the Father, the Mediator, the Man-God, Jesus Christ. His words tend to put in a clear light these two essential points: one only true God and one only true Messiah.

[4] *I Corinthians* viii, 5.

Him will be His glory no less than the merit of His adorers. As for Jesus Himself, He must be known like His Father, but not so much as true God, as the Christ and Mediator. Man can be saved only by uniting himself to Him in order to enter into the supernatural life. But, in order to unite himself thus, he must know and love.

"I have glorified Thee on earth," Jesus continues with the simplicity of the divine labourer doing justice to His work; "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; and now glorify Thou Me, O Father, with Thyself, with the glory which I had before the world was, with Thee." He has faithfully fulfilled His mission, His conscience bears witness to this fact; it is for the Father now to reward Him. As the Word, He has nothing to ask, for His glory and His triumph are eternal; but as man He asks for that which He has merited, the association of His human nature in the glory of His divine nature. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, in view of the hypostatic union? But Jesus asks it in humility and love, not through fear of being frustrated in His request, but because He derives a special satisfaction in this filial act of submission and prayer.

A summary of His work is not difficult to make. "I have manifested Thy name," He says, "to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world; Thine they were, and to Me Thou gavest them, and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things which Thou hast given Me are from Thee, because the words which Thou gavest Me, I have given to them; and they have received them and have known in very deed that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." This is the history of those who surround Him and who hear His prayer. First of all, bound to God by their uprightness of heart, these true and pure Israelites

broke with the world that hindered their religious development. The Father, to Whom they belonged not only as His creatures, but also as His servants, in the terms of the Mosaic Law, gave them over to His Son that they might become the first-fruits of the new religion. Then Jesus, opening their eyes, has made known to them by gradual and patient revelation, the name, the image, the life of the Father and the special character of the Messiah, Who appears to them henceforth, no longer as a redoubtable conqueror or powerful king, but as the bond uniting heaven and earth. By force of charity He has prepared them for the reception and preservation of the discourses which He brought them from heaven, and little by little they have come at last to salute the Master as Messiah and true Son of God. The collective profession of faith which they uttered a moment ago is the fruit of this labour. Jesus gladly yields Himself to the sweet impression which He received from it.

Although others may find that the harvest is mediocre after such great hardships, the divine Labourer, less exacting, declares Himself satisfied. It is because His eye discerns in this handful of men the spark that will kindle the flame, the army that will revolutionise the world, the masters of the future. With a tenderness all the deeper since they are so few for so great an undertaking, He shelters them with His care. One holds that especially dear which, having cost much, ought to bring forth much fruit.

"I pray for them," He says; "I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me, because they are Thine." How completely His paternal affection has grouped in this prayer all the arguments that may insure its efficacy! "I pray for them!" It is the Mediator, the Just One, the Son, the Well-beloved of the

Father Who supplicates, and He supplicates for *them*, the dearly bought flock, and the hope of the future. Were He to pray for the world, for those who, for having remained beyond His influence, belong not to Him, His prayer might not be heard;[5] but it is for those who belong to Him and to the Father that He intercedes. Is it possible for Him not to be heard? "All My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them." If the Father, following the Son's example, gives to this cherished little flock His love and His all-powerful protection, the result shall be that the Son shall be glorified by His faithful ones throughout the universe, and the Son's glory shall be reflected upon the Father. What the Father owes to the Apostles, what He owes to His Son, what He owes to Himself, these are the motives which Jesus' heart discovers and accumulates, as if haphazard, to make His prayer acceptable. They are all founded upon the divine relations of the most sublime order.

"And now I am not in the world," He continues, "and these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We also are." It is not enough merely to be worthy of the Father's protection; they need it. Jesus shall no longer be there to defend them, He is going to die; and between His death and His glorification that crucial moment shall come when the flock, were it left unaided by the Father, would run the risk of being

[5] It is in this sense that we must understand these words: "I pray not for the world." For, in an absolute sense, it would not be exact and would be in evident contradiction with several passages in which Jesus declares that He is come, not to judge the world, but to save it; that we must pray for the wicked, persecutors and unbelievers. (*St. Matt.* v, 44.) He Himself asked His Father to forgive those who put Him to death. Since He came to take away the sins of the world, He does much more than pray for the world; He forces it, willing or unwilling, into the way of salvation. It remains for the world to have the will to walk therein.

scattered. Therefore the Father shall have His work to do and must keep them united in His name until the Ascension brings on Pentecost, and the work of the Spirit is begun. At that time, too, as always, nothing shall be done without the Father's consent. It is He Who has given the Son for the salvation of the world; it is He Who will give the Spirit for its sanctification; and Jesus is right in invoking His good-will, not only for the Apostles and for a few days, but for the whole Church and for all time. The life of this Church depends entirely on the union of the members who constitute it. The union of the three divine Persons must therefore serve as its model. They live by one thought, by one will, by one love; the faithful, too, must be united in the same faith, the same rule of morals, the same charity. Strong in this threefold bond, the Christian society shall fear nothing and shall triumph over all. Jesus knows it, and hence He utters this prayer. How sweet and affectionate His language! How tender in speaking to His Holy Father, Whom He honours with the most cherished of titles, as if He sought, by flattering Him, the more surely to merit being heard.

Then, insisting with filial confidence: "While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name. Those whom Thou gavest Me, have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture may be fulfilled. And now I come to Thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy filled in themselves." This is the last service that Jesus does them on earth. His watchful solicitude, which has preserved them all, except Judas, is about to cease protecting them. There is now only the power of His prayer to assist them, and He devotes Himself to that with generosity.

To keep them as they are would not satisfy His desires. The Father must consent, moreover, to sanctify

them, and He must guard them not only against the physical violence of the world, but also against its moral influence. "I have given them Thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, as I also am not of the world." The Father then must have an interest in defending those whom the world hates for the simple reason that they have received the Father's word. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil. They are not of the world, as I also am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth; Thy word is truth." It could not be Jesus' desire to take them with Him out of this world, where they must remain to continue His teaching and His work. He does not wish to remove them from the field of battle, where they must needs struggle and conquer, but He begs that they may not be wounded and that, though dwelling in the midst of evil for the purpose of destroying it, they may not feel its taint. So He asks the Father to fortify them more and more in virtue and to strengthen them in justice by establishing them in His truth. Generally evil enters the heart only when error or illusion have made their way into the mind. Hence it appears to the Saviour decisive if the Father continues to give them the assistance of His word in order to prevent the enemy from deceiving and seducing them.

Their vocation makes virtue still more necessary for them. In order to help others to become just, they themselves must dwell in justice. "As Thou hast sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world, and for them do I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth." The Father has been the model and source of spiritual life for the Son Whom He sent to mankind. The Son desires to be always in this same relation with regard to those whom He in turn has sent.

He sanctifies Himself: that is, He struggles against the infirmities of the human nature which He has put on, He immolates in it whatever might impede the sacrifice, in a word, He continues His progress [6] in wisdom and virtue from His tenderest infancy that He may be the model of His Apostles.

He sanctifies Himself also, and this is perhaps the deepest and truest meaning of this word, by offering Himself as a victim in their behalf. For, a victim, according to the language of the Jews, became holy by the very fact that, cut off from all profane usage, it was reserved for the sacrifice, as if the God for Whom it was destined had immediately clothed it with His own sanctity in token of His acceptance.

"And not for them only do I pray," adds Jesus, "but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me." It is the Apostles' words which, spoken first and afterwards written, recounting the Master's works, or themselves deriving the dogmatic and moral deductions of His teachings, shall cause faith to spring up in the world and shall gather in the same belief and under the same law the members of the new society.

"That they may all be one." Moral cohesiveness is a matter of primary importance if the Church is to cope with all dangers and to offer in her own person a kind of substitute for the visible presence of Jesus Christ. A divided kingdom throws open its gates to the enemy.

It would not be enough, however, to be united in one body, if, by a superior union, that body did not itself receive life from the source which should distribute it. This source is God to Whom Jesus Christ binds the Church. "As Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee; that

[6] Compare this passage with St. Luke's remark: "And the child grew," etc. *St. Luke* ii, 40 and 52.

they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." There is nothing more striking, in the history of the world, than this perpetual union of the Church with Jesus Christ, and through Him with God. It is so intimate that Jesus Christ and God seem to live in the Christian society as if in permanent manifestation.[7]

"And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given to them, that they may be one, as We also are One. I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou also hast loved Me." Jesus desires that they may be no longer merely one among themselves, but especially one with God. It is through this union, the supreme perfection of their life, that they shall share the glory the germ of which they have received through the Incarnation. Let the Father ratify what the Son has so well begun, and accept the faithful as His children by adoption, brothers of Jesus Christ and co-heirs of His glory. The Master asks that this prodigy of divine mercy may commence in this life, and that it may afterwards be crowned in eternity. Can He consent to be separated from His own? "Father," He adds, "I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me, may be with Me, that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me, because Thou hast loved Me before the creation of the world." During the present life one fall is sufficient to detach from this divine union the soul that allows itself to embrace evil; in eternity nothing can break the chain that shall bind the Christian

[7] This transcendent phenomenon has attracted the attention of non-believers in all ages. They have sought to suppress it in order to offset an argument that is very embarrassing for them. Failing in this blameworthy enterprise, they have more than once acknowledged the divine hand in this superhuman master-work, though they have not always had the courage to kiss and adore it.

to Jesus Christ, and heaven's great joy shall be the sight of the Church triumphant, constituting only one heart and one soul, perpetually acclaiming her victorious King, while bearing on her own brow a ray of the divine glory of which He has achieved the conquest. In this shall consist the crowning of the work of the Incarnation: the Church attached to Jesus Christ as soldiers to their chief, Jesus Christ united with God as the Son with the Father, creation, in fine, happily brought back to its Creator as to its beginning.[8] At the same time sanctity and the divine attributes, radiant in Jesus Christ, shall pass, by a marvellous reflection, from the head to the members, and mankind, by a prodigy of the Father's love, in limits not easy to determine, shall be associated in the life divine.

This, no doubt, is asking much. Jesus supplicates the Father's mercy to aid His own good-will, and yet He does not admit that justice can suffer thereby. He means that even this latter cannot but sanction this extreme favour. "Just Father," He says, "the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." Bound to Jesus by faith, they participate in His merits and have a right to His reward.

"I have made known Thy name to them, and will make it known, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them, and I in them." If the disciples' knowledge still seems to the Father insufficient, Jesus promises to develop it, after His resurrection and particularly at Pentecost, so that He shall be wholly in them, filling their minds with His doctrine, their wills with His law, their hearts with His love; in a word, quickening their life with

[8] This is the admirable fulfilment of the idea thus summed up by St. Paul: "To re-establish all things in Christ," (ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι). "Ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (*Eph.* i, 10; *I Cor.* iii, 23.)

His own life. They, the living images of the well-beloved Son, cannot but be cherished of the Father.

Here ends this touching prayer. Standing between God and His people, the Pontiff had uttered the cry of the suppliant. Now He had only to offer His sacrifice. Quickly arousing them from that contemplative state in which this sublime and filial prayer still held them, He at last leads them out of doors, impatient to undergo the painful trial which His enemies have prepared for Him.

Section II

The Trial of the Messiah

CHAPTER I

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE

The Entrance into the Garden—The Hour of Satan's Assault—Trouble in the Soul of Jesus —The Prayer—The Bloody Sweat and Agony— The Angel of Consolation—The Victory: "Rise, Let us Go." (St. John xviii, 1; St. Matthew xxvi, 30, 36–46; St. Mark xiv, 26, 32–42; St. Luke xxii, 39–46.)

It must have been about ten o'clock in the evening.[1] Through the already deserted streets of the city Jesus and the Apostles descended into the valley of Cedron [2] towards

[1] The supper must have commenced about seven o'clock, and from the incidents and conversations that had occupied the time, we believe that it lasted at least three hours.

[2] The readings vary between τῶν Κέδρων, τοῦ Κέδρου, and τοῦ Κέδρων. This last form is the best. Josephus (*Antiq.*, viii, 1, 5) employs it, without deeming Κέδρων indeclinable, however, since he says: Χείμαῤῥος Κέδρῶνος. The Septuagint translates *Nahal Qidron* (*II Kings* xv, 23; *III Kings* ii, 37) ὁ Χείμαῤῥος κέδρων. In any case, it would be attributing a singular error to the author of the fourth Gospel to claim that he says: *the river of the cedar or of the cedars.* The word *Qidron*, in Hebrew, means *black.* The Greeks likewise had streams which they called black Μέλας. (*Herodotus* vii, 58, etc.) The water of a torrent is generally muddy, and its bed is ordinarily deep-cut. In this instance the name comes from the gloomy gorges of that valley which, scarcely perceptible north of Jerusalem, reaches a depth of nearly 180 feet between the area of the Temple and the Mount of Olives, and, in the direction of the Dead Sea, passes by Marsaba, between

the Mount of Olives. This was the road to Bethany; but on that evening Jesus was not to return to His friends' house.

Crossing the bed of the river the Apostolic group halted before a garden called Gethsemane or the Oil-press.[3] The grove, which was probably enclosed, contained a kind of pleasure resort.[4] It may be that the proprietor was a friend of Jesus. Many have thought that Gethsemane belonged to the family of Lazarus. In any case, it was not the first time that the Master came there, and no doubt it was the custom to assemble there [5] as at a meeting place on leaving Jerusalem and before setting out for the village of Martha and Mary. Although He foresaw that Judas would bring His enemies to this spot, He was not led to modify this usual evening programme.[6]

Jesus entered the enclosure, and, inviting the Apostles to sit down and await Him near the entrance, perhaps in the dwelling-house, He advanced into the middle of the grove, with Peter, James and John, to pray.

The great drama was beginning. Perceiving the approach of the fatal hour, the Redeemer sought to meet His Father face to face to hold converse with Him. The great voice of God which long ago in the shades of Eden had summoned fallen man: "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" had been for four thousand years without an answer. No son of sinful humanity had had the courage to respond: "Here am I!" It was for the New Man to

abrupt cliffs 450 feet in height. The Cedron is nearly always dry except in the season of heavy rains.

[3] This word comes from *gath*, a press, and *schemen*, oil.

[4] We may conclude this from the incident of the young man who in *St. Mark* xiv, 51, was present in night-dress at the scene of the arrest. Besides Josephus tells us that the environs of Jerusalem were covered with villas. (*B. J.* vi, 1, and v, 3.)

[5] *St. John* xviii, 2.

[6] This is what is meant in *St. Luke* xxii, 39, κατὰ τὸ ἔθος.

break that silence. For Jesus, indeed, ready to pay for all, seems to advance towards the divine wrath, exclaiming: *Ecce Venio*! Adam awaits his judge!

By this free and generous act He meant to assume humanity entire together with the responsibility for its crimes, and to speak, to act, to expiate as if He alone were mankind. Thus He constituted Himself really a New Man summing up by substitution in His life the lives of all, in His heart the hearts of all, and in His soul the souls of all. But what crushing responsibilities such an acceptance involved! By saying to His Father: "Forget Thy Son now, and behold in Me only fallen humanity asking that it may expiate its long-continued faithlessness; let Thy justice have full play!" He gave Himself up to every torture, for the crimes of humanity are most varied and countless. If each one of these required a special reparation, how terrible was the blow which all of them together could inflict upon the body, the heart, and the soul of Him Who presented Himself as an atonement for them all! The more so, since, however hard the labour, Jesus, in order to furnish it, could look for help from no one. He alone, according to the prophet's words,[7] was to enter the press of the divine wrath.

There was an added circumstance in His sufferings that made His agony a trial as intolerable for Him as it is mysterious to us. Suddenly, into His soul which, of its own right and from the moment of His birth, had enjoyed the beatific vision, there came a strange eclipse. God seemed to withdraw Himself, He seemed to abandon the Man to His own resources with a rigour that knew no pity; He concealed Himself so completely as to provoke that heart-rending cry which was afterwards heard from

[7] *Isaias* lxiii, 3. It is remarkable that the place where Jesus was, was named the *Oil-press*.

the Cross: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" How may we understand this prodigious phenomenon, since the hypostatic union is indissoluble? Our eye cannot penetrate the cloud; our curiosity must halt before problems of so transcendent an order. It is a mystery. Whatever one may say, one cannot explain it, one can only run the risk of compromising its harmony. Let us be firmly content with these two data of the problem, both of which are equally incontestable: the divine nature in Jesus was inseparable from the human nature, and yet the latter underwent the trial, struggled and suffered as if it had been separated from the former. For we cannot imagine a more bitter and more real agony than that which causes a sweating of blood.[8]

The picture traced for us by the Synoptics[9] of Jesus' condition at the moment when He leaves His disciples is striking. The humanity of our Lord is there fully seen in all its reality and its holiness. A vague terror weighs Him down and crushes Him. A loathing soon follows, and moves Him to profound sadness.[10] This trembling of the whole being belongs to the essential phenomena of life. The purer and the more guarded humanity is from the violent passions, the more delicate and sensible it is be-

[8] Nearly every discussion, both of ancient and modern times, bearing upon the human development of our Lord, and the conditions under which His soul was tempted, made capable of merit, etc., etc., seems to ignore the fact that we are dealing here with the very mystery of the Incarnation. Since we have no clear idea of two natures united in a single person, we cannot define the conditions to which humanity was subjected in relation to Godhead in the hypostatic union.

[9] St. John has said nothing of the agony in Gethsemane, but he had written the prelude of it at the time of the presentation of the Greeks (xii, 23–28), and he shows us (xvii,[1]) Jesus entering the Garden where He was to suffer it. This silence has no more dogmatic bearing than the corresponding silence which he observes on the subject of the institution of the Eucharist, after having given us the discourse on the Bread of Life, ch. vi.

[10] In terms which are suggestive of grief, λυπεῖσθαι, ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, ἀδημονεῖν, the first two Synoptics note the degrees of this tragic agony.

neath the embrace of moral woe. No longer checking His emotion, the Master began to speak: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death!" It was a quick transition from that sweet peace, which had inspired in Him the last farewell at the Supper, to a sudden agitation that disturbs His whole moral being. But does not the stone suddenly loosed from the mountainside spoil the clearness of the spring by stirring it to its depths? Does not the hurricane on a sudden hurl up the waves of the ocean and the sands of the desert? To hide the sight of His agony from the three privileged disciples, the Master withdraws a few steps away. It seems that although he derived a human consolation from their presence, He preferred to stand apart from them through fear of doing them harm. "Stay ye here," He said to them, "and watch with Me. Pray lest ye enter into temptation." His thought was then, to associate them, though at a distance, in the great act of love, of obedience, of sacrifice, which He was about to accomplish. Alas! He was to find in them, who were the elect of the Apostolic college, only drowsy men without any true sense of the solemnity of this occasion.

He withdrew perhaps a stone's throw, says the Evangelist, and fell on His knees. This attitude befitted the Victim awaiting the mortal blow, and testing it in advance, as if to know its full violence. Even if He had not with His prophetic glance sounded the abyss of woes into which He was about to descend, Satan would have taken care to place before His eyes this dark repulsive picture. We know that the tempter, after his first vain struggle, had held himself in reserve awaiting a favourable[11] opportunity later on for a fresh attack. The present hour was

[11] Elsewhere we have noted the words with which *St. Luke* iv, 13 closes the account of the temptation: *ὁ διάβολος ἀπέστη ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἄχρι καιροῦ.*

once more his,[12] and Jesus desired in vain to escape it.[13] As he had been in the desert, Satan was also in Gethsemane.

Temptation is directed against man's heart sometimes by violent desires, sometimes by foolish fears. Jesus had long ago been insensible to covetousness, would He allow Himself now to be overcome by fear? Satan, in the midst of light mingled with darkness, might have asked himself this. When he is desirous of capturing man through fear, his cleverness consists in injecting a vague terror into the soul, repugnance into the heart, hesitation into the will. Thus he often overturns our resolutions, our aspirations and our strongest convictions.

To Jesus, Who had come into the presence of His Father to confer concerning our redemption, he represented first of all in the liveliest colours all the physical and moral sufferings that His enemies held in store for Him. From Judas' kiss to the gall mixed with myrrh and vinegar, from the scene of derision to the final desolation on the Cross, not forgetting the bloody rods of the flagellation and the crown of thorns, from the insulting pride of Caiphas, the cynical contempt of Herod, the selfish cowardice of Pilate to the insults that re-echoed on the rock of Calvary, nothing was omitted. Jesus knew better than he how frightfully severe it all was, and as He beheld the hideous picture, His first movement of fright was changed into a sentiment of stupefaction[14] that rendered Him motionless.

Immediately, to make the assault more formidable, Satan seemed to hurl down upon His soul, one by one, all the crimes of mankind, and to strive to crush Him beneath the weight of so much infamy. The Just One looked upon His hands and saw them reeking with the blood shed by

[12] *St. John* xiv, 30, and *St. Luke* xxii, 53. [13] *St. Mark* xiv, 35.
[14] This is the sense of ἤρέατο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι.

the homicides of all ages. In His astonished soul thundered, as it were, the voices of impiety and of blasphemy, the abominable outcries of humanity so long in rebellion, and now suddenly taking refuge in Him to make Him responsible for its scandalous excesses. His pure heart shook with the tumult of the most violent passions. The most profound sanctuary of His soul belonged to God, no doubt, more than ever; but a thick atmosphere of evil surrounded Him, was overwhelming Him. With quick energy His unalterable sanctity shook off the horrible cloak of crimes which human malice was throwing about His shoulders; Satan replaced it on Him with the words: "If thou wilt wash them away, thou must bear them." [15] Thus infamously transformed, the Son would merit naught but the just severity of His Father. The Well-Beloved became the Accursed. What heroism in assuming such a responsibility, in accepting the punishment though guiltless of the fault!

Under the crushing burden which He now received, Jesus had unconsciously bent His head to earth. The angry countenance of the Father upon which He has just looked has overwhelmed His soul. He can bear it no longer, and, rising up: "Father," He cries out, "if it be possible, and all things are possible [16] to Thee, let this chalice pass from Me! But not what I will, but what Thou wilt." Satan then has nothing to do here. It is with His Father alone that Jesus will conclude the awful contract. Cannot the justice of God remove in some measure the frightful bitterness of this overflowing chalice? Is sin then so great an injury that it must be expiated by so terrible a repara-

[15] This is the sense of the prophet's words: "Iniquitates nostras ipse tulit," of those of St. John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world"; and of St. Paul's "Pro nobis peccatum fecit."

[16] Jesus appeals here to the Father's love for Him, and to that infinite possibility which is mingled with the divine liberty.

tion? Death He has long since accepted, and nothing can prevent Him from saving the world; but death together with the malediction of His Father, how can He endure both? And yet He must, because, Lamb of God though He is, never having known sin, He assumes the place of sinners. It is because He has taken this place that His suppliant cry has not penetrated the skies, and the name of the Father uttered with so much love has remained powerless on His lips. In reality, He prays with earnestness, but He does not desire to force the Father's will which, in this instance, is not in accord with His, without there being, however, in this divergency even the shadow of an imperfection. The Father desires the sacrifice; from the viewpoint of His justice, this is His right. The Son does not desire it, giving ear to the claims of His human nature, and this is His right. Human nature was not created for suffering and it instinctively and energetically rejects it. Without this innate repugnance, the acceptance of grief would never be a sacrifice. Face to face with the immolation suggested, nature inevitably and spontaneously cries out: No! This may be called the will, but it is not the whole will, nor even a part of the true will, for this instinctive movement is subject to a superior command of the soul which perceives its duty where the exigencies of a higher order point it out. This superior command silences the otherwise legitimate cry of nature, and this it is that adds to the first part of Jesus' supplication: "If it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me!" the second part which reduces it to its true proportions by removing every possibility of a conflict: "But not what I will, but what Thou wilt!"

It has been said that the Saviour then suffered all the pains of hell save despair. It is certain that the emotion of His soul disturbed His whole physical being. His blood

in lively ferment finally broke through its conducting vessels, and escaped with the abundant perspiration that was streaming from His whole body.[17] The combat became more and more violent. His flesh, His soul, His mind, all sought to fly the awful sacrifice; His will alone stood fast, and holding, so to speak, the three victims beneath the hand, it dragged them on in spite of themselves to the immolation, in conformity with that which the Father's good pleasure exacted. In Jesus' life there was nothing greater than the superhuman struggle so justly called His agony.

As if to fortify Himself by the sight of those He loves, and from whom He expects perhaps an affectionate word in the midst of this fearful combination of hate and fury that surrounds Him, the Master rises and goes to the three disciples whom He had invited to watch and pray with Him. They had fallen asleep. In a tenderly reproachful tone He turned to the most devoted among them, to Peter, who promised to go with Him even to death, were it necessary, and who is not even able to watch with Him: "Simon, sleepest thou?" He says. "Couldst thou not watch one hour with me?" He perceives, as if with painful astonishment, but it is, alas! true, that every one is forsaking Him, even His most cherished friends

[17] The possibility of this phenomenon, without the aid of a miracle, is no longer called in doubt by science which cites numerous examples of it. I may be permitted to add another which should have had its place in the beautiful *Life of Père Lacordaire*, by the P. Chocarne, had it been better known. It was in 1860, at Sorèze; the great religious, who had been ill for some time, had just read a letter which troubled his sensitive soul, touching it, as it were, to the very quick of its nobler susceptibilities. His hair rose on end and his brain seemed to be on fire. A reddish perspiration came out upon his forehead. Wiping his brow he was astonished to find his handkerchief stained with blood. I heard this fact from the Dominican Father who was with him at the time. It is especially in delicate and sensitive natures that the influence of the moral upon the physical is the more intensely exerted. St. Luke who was a physician could not fail to relate this striking incident.

for whom He had lived and for whom He was going to die. Their indifference at so solemn a moment foreboded their approaching desertion. "Watch ye and pray," He added, "that ye enter not into temptation." Sleep is dangerous when one must decide with energy. The sleeper no longer sees his duty clearly and he loses somewhat of the liberty necessary for its fulfilment. In the solemn events of life the senses must be on the alert and the soul in prayer. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." These words spoke of the terrible trial which He Himself was undergoing. Had their eyes, less heavy with sleep, beheld the Master's august face in the pale light of the moon, they would have discovered it to be cruelly transfigured, not with glory now, as on the mountain, but with grief. Where formerly a radiant light had shone, there now shone a sweat of blood. He had reason to say that the flesh is weak, and that a strong will is necessary to lead it on to death.

Unaided by the Apostles, whom He leaves a second time, Jesus turns once more to God. Again He prostrates Himself to pour forth lovingly before Him His desolate soul and His most ardent prayers. His tears and His blood bathed and sanctified the earth that had remained cursed for forty centuries. What admirable symbolism! It was in a garden that the first man had ruined his posterity, it is in a garden that the New Man prays and suffers that He may save the new humanity; and this garden is planted with olive-trees, as if this latest sign of peace were necessary to give true meaning to the treaty that is being concluded between heaven and earth. Adam had lost us by lifting up His head in pride, in covetousness, in sensuality, towards the forbidden tree; Jesus saves us with His face upon the ground in humiliation, in suffering, in renouncement, under the pacific olive-tree of Gethsemane.

However urgent the august Suppliant may be in His woe, no one seems to hear Him. He therefore sends forth another cry to heaven, but in it He gives greater emphasis to His resignation. The Father's severity, in fact, seems to make Him more timid. "My Father," He says, "if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, Thy will be done!"[18] It may not; hence heaven is still silent above Him. Satan at this moment perhaps explains to Him the uselessness of His sacrifice. The men for whom He is going to die will mock His sufferings even at the foot of His Cross. Few only will come to sit and to pray beneath the Tree of Life. Is it, in truth, worth the trouble to plant it with so much woe and to bedew it thus with His blood? And Jesus replies: "I will die nevertheless, and My Father shall be glorified, and My friends shall be saved."

He arises to go once more to find the three disciples, the cherished nucleus of the future Church. To look upon them even sleeping will be a solace to Him. The silence of the night, in which He hears only the violent throbbing of His own heart is intolerable. Peter, James, and John were sleeping more soundly than before. One never sleeps better than after a deep moral agitation. The emotions of that evening, sadness,[19] the advanced hour of the night, could not but add to the heaviness of their eyelids. When

[18] There is a very perceptible difference between the first entreaty and the second. His first prayer was: "If it be possible, . . . let this chalice pass from me! But not what I will, but what Thou wilt!" either because the first sight of the bitter chalice had struck Him more keenly, or because He had greater hope in the Father's mercy. Now He exclaims: "If this chalice may not pass away, Thy will be done." There is no longer any mention of His own will. The more clearly He perceives the Father's inflexible decree, the more He habituates Himself to the idea of draining the cup, and He submits His will. It may be for this reason that *Hebrews* v, 8, says: "He learned obedience." (Cf. *Rom.* v, 19; *Phil.* ii, 8.)

[19] St. Luke makes this observation. This Evangelist, who had practised medicine, must have been fond of noting such details.

the Master spoke, they knew not what to answer. Jesus, distressed at such a sight, did not insist.

For the last time He withdrew to pray.[20] It may be that this threefold prayer really corresponded with the sentiments of fear, of loathing, and of sorrow which, as a threefold temptation, had invaded His heart. Inexorable and silent, as before, the Father held Himself invisible to the anxious eyes of the wretched Victim. However, as He seemed almost undone, He sent an angel to strengthen Him.[21] Like Him the great ones of earth, that they may the better refuse a favour, withdraw themselves from the importunities of suppliants, and send their servants with useless encouragement to those whom they are deputed to dismiss.[22]

The angel declared that Jesus had conquered. For the struggle was over. Nature's last repugnance had just yielded before the justice of heaven which was inexorable.

[20] The first Synoptic notes the three prayers offered by Jesus; the second mentions only two, while leaving room for three; the third only speaks of one, but it gives the apparition of the consoling angel and the sweat of blood, which the other two omit.

[21] In many highly authoritative manuscripts, the *Vaticanus* and the *Alexandrinus*, these verses 43 and 44 in St. Luke are wanting, as St. Epiphanius, St. Hilary, and St. Jerome observe. In others they are marked with a note of dubiety. But all the most ancient versions (the *Itala* and the *Peschito*) have translated them, and St. Justin, St. Irenæus, St. Hippolytus, St. Epiphanius, read them in their time, believing them to be authentic. It is very probable that under the stress of dogmatic prejudices, a few zealous copyists sought to suppress this mention of an angel who comforted the Son of God, and of the sweat which humiliated Him. They thought, by so doing, to deprive the Arians of an argument of considerable force. Suppression is easier to believe than interpolation in this instance.

[22] The apparition of this angel has been explained in various ways. For some, it was wholly interior, according to the text: "Ὤφθη . . . αὐτῷ," and signified an invisible assistance sent to Jesus. This view can hardly be admitted. For others, it was a bad angel who came to let loose all his fury against the wretched Victim. This also is contrary to the text. The majority have beheld here a heavenly spirit commissioned to sustain the courage of Our Lord, ἐνισχύων, and to glorify Him by testifying to His fortitude. In like manner angels came and surrounded Him in the desert, after His triumph over the tempter.

The human will had been completely broken by the will of God. Jesus arose resolutely and, rejoining His disciples, still covered with traces of His bloody strife like an athlete returning victorious from the combat, He appeared once more possessed of His usual serenity and strength of soul: "Sleep now," He said to them, "and take your rest. It is enough." [23]

His transition from despondency to courage is as speedy as was that from tranquillity to anguish. He has seen or heard the enemy approaching, and He resumes His wonted manner, not without some trace of trouble or emotion in the rapidity with which His soul and His words leap as it were from one warning or invitation to another; but it is evident that His will leads on the Victim in triumph and that mankind shall be redeemed. "The hour is come," He exclaims, "Behold the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand."

At the same time, He turned towards the rest of the Apostles who were at the entrance of the garden. He was eager to protect them against the enemy who approached.

It was about midnight.[24]

[23] The word ἀπέχει in St. Mark has embarrassed the interpreters. It is found scarcely anywhere except in a passage of Anacreon (xxviii, 33), and is commonly translated by *it is enough*. In *St. Luke* xv, 20, xxiv, 13, and *St. Matt.* xv, 8, it signifies *to be far away, to disappear*. Taking it in this latter sense and giving it a subject, Jesus would have said: "My anguish is over." In the other sense, after having given the Apostles permission to sleep as much as they might wish, the Master, seeing Judas appear, withdraws His permission, saying: "It is enough; the hour is come," etc. It may be also that, sad and ironical, He said to them: "Ye have struggled long enough with fatigue and sleep; sleep, then, and rest as ye will." We can understand better, then, how immediately after, putting aside the irony to which the grief of a strong soul may have recourse, He cries out: "Rise up, let us go."

[24] From these words of Jesus: "Could you not watch *one* hour with me," we conclude that each of His prayers lasted less than one hour, and that consequently the whole agony lasted about two hours.

CHAPTER II

THE ARREST

Cedron and Gethsemane—The Activity of Judas—The Traitor's Kiss—Whom Seek Ye?—Malchus and Peter—The Flight of the Apostles—Jesus Taken Captive. (St. Matthew xxvi, 47–56; St. Mark xiv, 43–52; St. Luke xxii, 47–53; St. John xviii, 2–11.)

The garden of Gethsemane was on the left of the stream, at the very point where the road to Bethany passed. Even to-day its site is sufficiently well determined by the little wall built on this historical spot by the Franciscans. In the small enclosure, touching, on one side, the high banks of the Cedron, and on the other softly blending with the base of the Mount of Olives, eight trees many centuries old, like half-broken ancient columns, lift their gnarled trunks from which stretch down the heavy, wide-spreading branches. Even if it should be true that Titus at the time of the siege really destroyed all traces of vegetation [1] around the city, we are none the less inclined to believe that these eight olive-trees are the offshoots of those which, then cut down by the Roman army, had sheltered beneath their dark foliage the mysteries of the divine Agony. The great longevity of this tree is well known. The tears of pious pilgrims, which have for so many years bedewed them, would seem to assure them an eternal old age.[2]

[1] *B. J.* v, 6, 2.
[2] *Voyage aux Pays Bibliques*, vol. i, p. 253.

From this silent and solitary place it was easy to hear and even to see the approach of an armed band as it issued from Jerusalem. The valley of the Cedron is calm at night, and the slightest noise awakes its echoes. Seen in the clear moonlight in early April, the country-side always has a profoundly melancholy aspect. Whether Judas and his followers descended into the valley by the road leading from the Temple, or by that road which enters the ravine by way of the Sheep-Gate, Jesus, from the midst of the grove, could watch the movements of the sinister crowd which, armed with torches, marked its path with a trail of wan light upon the great walls of the city. The hurried step, the guarded silence of the troop, the clanking of arms, all betrayed a formal expedition and a well-organised attack.

Judas, in fact, furious on quitting the banquet-hall, had declared to the chief priests that he was ready to fulfil his engagement. This time the moment seemed singularly propitious. He knew where to find Jesus, and at that hour of the night every one had retired to his home with his family, both in Jerusalem and in the camps around the city. There was no danger of any uproar. His plan seemed good, and without delay the chiefs of the Sanhedrim hurriedly assembled their criers, their servants, as well as the guardians of the Temple, and armed them with swords and staves. Then foreseeing the possibility of a conflict with Galilean mountaineers, whose valour was no secret, they seem to have demanded as a reinforcement of this ill-armed and undisciplined troop the help of Roman soldiers.[3] It may have been this demand

[3] According to John we are led to believe a Roman cohort took part in the arrest. For the word σπεῖρα, which he employs, is understood in the New Testament, only of the Roman soldiers (*St. Matt.* xxvii, 29; *Acts* x, 1, xxvii, 1), and we find the captain mentioned under the name Χιλίαρχος, which the Greeks used to indicate the Roman tribunes (*Acts* xxi, 31; *Antiq.*, xix,

addressed to the procurator during the night, that filled his wife's mind with painful dreams concerning Jesus. Pilate, who had come from Cæsarea to see to the maintenance of order during the Paschal feasts, was probably glad to manifest his good will to the Sanhedrim and had granted a small detachment with a tribune to conduct the expedition.

Whether because the sky was darkened and the weather gloomy, in spite of the full moon,[4] or because they feared that they might have to pursue Jesus among the winding passages or abandoned tombs which are found on the western side of the Mount of Olives, they had provided themselves with torches and lanterns. To prevent any mistake and to show clearly the One to seize, Judas had agreed with his men on a particular sign. "Whomsoever I shall kiss," he had said, "that is He, lay hold on Him." It has been asked if the disciples were in the habit of kissing the Master when they rejoined Him. This is not probable. In any case, they would have kissed Him on the hands or on the breast in token of respect. But after the final incidents of the Last Supper, it would seem that Judas especially could not without any preliminary word permit himself such familiarity. Moreover, this embrace could not have been an ordinary one. In all probability the wretched man adding unheard-of perversity to his

2–3). Josephus (*Antiq.*, xx, 4) tells us that at the Paschal festival the governors sent a company of warriors to mount guard at the gate of the Temple and to prevent any uprising. He observes again (*B. J.* v, 5) that the fortress Antonia, situated on the north wall of the Temple, had steps on which Roman soldiers passed to and fro for the purpose of keeping order. "So that," he adds, "as the temple was the citadel of the city, so the tower Antonia was the citadel of the temple." It is probably this guard that the Evangelist designates with the article τὴν σπεῖραν, as being well known to everybody. He by no means intends to say that the whole cohort was set in motion.

[4] At ten o'clock at night on the fourteenth of Nisan, the moon by its position, leaves a part of the valley of the Cedron in the shadow.

crime, had thought of presenting himself before the Master, not as a friend, but as a penitent. By pretending to ask His favour, he found a very natural reason for throwing himself upon His neck and embracing Him effusively. Nothing, we must admit, could be more abominable than this transformation of the kiss, the sweet sign of peace, into a sign of war, and the history of mankind knows no blacker treason than this serpent's bite thus dissimulated beneath the protestation of love.

Ordinarily the wicked, once determined to commit crime, neglect nothing in order that they may succeed. So Judas had advised the soldiers carefully to surround Jesus when they had seized Him, and cautiously to lead Him away. He feared lest the love of the true disciples might be stronger than his hatred, and that their fidelity might still overcome his treason.

Thus prepared by craft and supported by the public power, the expedition arrived at Gethsemane at the moment when Jesus had just rejoined the whole group of the Apostles.

The scene was enacted at the entrance of the garden.[5] According to St. Luke, the traitor was ahead of the crowd,[6] and perhaps also so far ahead that the latter might not seem to have common cause with him. For, had he presented himself together with the crowd, the show of affection which he wished to make would be not only strange but almost impracticable and useless. For him to appear to be the leader of an evidently hostile troop, and to approach and embrace the Master were inconsistent. The armed soldiers therefore remained at a distance, perhaps behind the hedge of the enclosure, watching what was about to occur. Judas presented himself alone: "Master,

[5] *St. John* xviii, 4.

[6] Ἰούδας . . . προήρχετο αὐτούς, he says, verse 47.

Master," he says, betraying in this repetition the trouble of his soul, "Hail!" And approaching, he sought to kiss Him. With one word Jesus strove to check him and to save him from this awful sacrilege. "Friend,"[7] He says to him, "whereto art thou come?" The wretch would not hear, but put forth his arms towards the Master's august head, as towards the victim whom he was about to stifle. The Gospel text[8] seems to insinuate that he had the impudence to prolong his embrace, as if it were still an insufficient sign of his love and of his repentance. Jesus, holding him in His divine clasp, spoke to him one word which was the last appeal of grace. He must have been God to have been so gentle and so tender in the presence of such hatred and such hypocrisy. "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" The reproach lacked nothing to make it cut. For Jesus reminds the wretch who he is: Judas, one of the Twelve so long admitted to His friendship; Whom he betrays: the Son of Man at the same time Son of God, the Messiah Whom he has served and honoured until this hour, and Whose reign is about to commence; how he betrays Him: by a kiss in blackest perfidy.

The crowd which has witnessed everything, at once approaches. Jesus is sufficiently pointed[9] out to them. They form a group and prepare to surround Him. At the same time the Apostles half asleep are aroused by the tumult. Those who were not asleep begin to discern

[7] The word ἑταῖρε, which He uses, implies a close familiarity (*St. Matt.* xx, 13; xxii, 12).

[8] The word κατεφίλησεν means a tenderly emotional embrace. We read in Xenophon, *Mem.* ii, 6, 33: ὡς τοὺς μὲν καλοὺς φιλήσαντός μου, τοὺς δ' ἀγαθοὺς καταφιλήσαντος. Cf. *Job* vii, 6; *Eccles.* xxix, 5.

[9] The question that Jesus will soon ask them shall not be to make Himself known, but to separate the cause of the disciples from His own. Thus the account in the Synoptics and in St. John, which at first sight might seem contradictory, the former relating only Judas' kiss, the latter only the panic in the crowd, explain and complete each other.

the danger. Their first move is to make ready to sustain the conflict. With a sign Jesus withholds them. Then, with a thought for their lives, which He does not wish to expose, He turns to the multitudes and to Judas, who from this time on mingled with them: "Whom seek ye?" He exclaims. "Jesus of Nazareth," respond the emissaries of the Sanhedrim, not daring to say boldly "Thee!" and to place themselves thus in direct relation with Him. For they could no longer doubt that Jesus was He who spoke. "I am He!" said the Master with that gesture and that look of majesty that shall overwhelm the lost on the day of judgment. His words hurl them back and send them rolling in the dust. History knows, in the life of Marius [10] and of Marcus Antonius [11] how the power of human majesty impressed itself upon the headsmen. In this very book, we have wondered at Jesus' irresistible influence over the profaners of the Temple. But nothing can equal the thunderbolt that strikes down and throws into confusion all these men armed and ready to seize Him. Nothing, it is true, is more quickly communicated than fear in a faltering troop that finds itself suddenly face to face, not with a victim, as it thought, but with an enemy that fears it not. Judas especially and those who knew Jesus must have trembled as they discerned in the Master's words that tone of authority with which they had heard Him utter His commands to life and death. The panic of a few of the soldiers has seemed to many to explain sufficiently the fall of all the rest; but the Evangelist's idea is that Jesus put into His response a supernatural energy capable of annihilating the whole cohort, had He not softened its effect. Was He less powerful than Elias or than Eliseus? [12]

[10] *Velleius Paterculus* ii, 19, 3. [11] *Valerius Maximus* viii, 9, 2.
[12] *IV Kings* i, 10; ii, 24; v, 27.

Did not the word of His disciple strike down Ananias and do him to death?[13] Was it not He that had said: "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword?"[14] Shall not His breath alone one day, as St. Paul says,[15] have the power of destroying the Antichrist? Is not His voice even now enough to terrify the impious and the persecutor whenever through the medium of the Church, He cries out to them: "Whom seek ye?" And when to their challenge He replies: "Here am I," He disconcerts them and they tremble.

When the soldiers, recovered from their fright, had regained their feet, Jesus more gently, but visibly conscious of a triumph which He determined to leave without personal results, again asked: "Whom seek ye?" They again replied: "Jesus of Nazareth." "I have told you that I am He," returned Jesus; and then at once drawing the conclusion which was His first thought: "If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way." He wished to prove thus that, since He alone was sought, they should respect the lives of His disciples, who were soon to be His witnesses and His preachers. He fulfilled, too, in this the tender figure of the shepherd who instead of fleeing and abandoning his sheep to the teeth of the wolf, protects them by his bravery, and saves them at the price of his own life. Thus, as St. John observes, the Master was faithful to His promise, and suffered no one of them whom the Father had given Him, to perish. What would have become of this timid flock had it been obliged to share the chalice reserved for the Master? The bravest of them all, Peter, did not withstand the words of a maid-servant, how then could the others have stood up before the judges and the tortures they might inflict? But

[13] *Acts* v, 5. [14] *Isaias* xlix, 2.
[15] *II Thessal.* ii, 8.

if the Apostles failed Him, what would become of the Gospel?

Indeed, they seemed at that moment most resolute. For, while Jesus, treating with the enemy, was demanding safety and liberty for the Apostles, the latter were preparing to assume the offensive. When they saw what was going to happen, they at once said to the Master: "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" Peter,[16] with his natural ardour waits for no response, but strikes one of those nearest to him. He had aimed at his head. The wounded man was called Malchus.[17] This vigorous and rash demonstration on the part of the chief of the Apostles is explained not only by his stamp of character, but also by that which has just occurred. The power of a word from Jesus over the multitude had exalted him. The Master's danger deprives him of his self-possession. The sight of the cowardice of so many who were attacking a single man Who is so gentle in spite of His omnipotence, makes him forget the danger of facing armed adversaries so numerous and supported by a detachment of Roman soldiers. He says to himself that if he, Peter, begins the battle, Jesus will surely be able to carry it on to victory.

Malchus was a servant of the High-Priest. Peter had attacked him, either because this servant, in his zeal, stood in the front rank, and appeared more officious than the

[16] The Synoptics do not give the name of this courageous disciple, whereas St. John does. It has been thought that the reason of this must be sought in the respective dates of the compilation of the Gospels, as if the Synoptics, written during Peter's life, had feared to expose this Apostle to the vengeance of the Jews by proclaiming this daring act, whereas St. John, writing after Peter's death, did not consider himself obliged to take the same precaution. This is a strange explanation of one of the thousand details, which, in the Gospel, must remain unexplained.

[17] It is St. John again who names the wounded servant, because, as we shall see later on, the household of the High-Priest was particularly well known to him (xviii, 16). Thus verse 26 proves to us that he knew even the relative of Malchus. These are details that an impostor would not invent.

rest, or because the first of the disciples was eager to try his strength with the emissary of his Master's most bitter enemy. The blow, which he aimed at his head, badly directed or perhaps turned by Jesus' own hand, fell only upon his right ear,[18] and with so little force as to cut it only partially off. Jesus had merely to touch it, and it was replaced and healed. This act of omnipotence and charity explains why Peter was not seized and chastised on the spot by the multitude. "Suffer ye thus far,"[19] said the Master authoritatively; "put up thy sword into thy scabbard; for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot ask My Father, and He will give me presently more than twelve legions of Angels? How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done? The chalice which my Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"[20] There are two reasons then why they should not engage in any struggle with the enemy: the first flows from the Christian spirit itself, the second from God's Will which must be accomplished. Jesus and His disciples must oppose only a passive resistance against their adversaries, the patience of the saints, as it is called in the Apocalypse.[21] The

[18] The fact that the ears of the Orientals are often of extraordinary size and are pressed out wide by the weight of heavy turbans, explains how a misdirected stroke of the sword might have cut off the ear of Malchus without endangering his head. This incident is related by the four Evangelists, but it is to be remarked that St. Luke and St. John agree upon an insignificant detail, namely, that the ear cut off was the right ear. This unexpected harmony between the fourth Gospel and a Synoptic is a source of satisfaction; but why did St. John, if he wished to supply the omissions of the Synoptics, mention this detail and pass over in silence the whole story of the Agony in Gethsemane? These are unanswerable difficulties.

[19] Such is probably the meaning of the words: Ἐᾶτε ἕως τούτου, which some have translated: "Let these wicked men proceed as far as they wish," or even as referring to Malchus' wound: "Let me reach this man, I shall heal his wound."

[20] These words, found only in St. John, allude probably to the Agony in Gethsemane, which, however, he has omitted to narrate.

[21] *Apocal.* xiii, 10.

Church can gain nothing by the use of the sword. For she risks finding the sword raised against her, and descending from the pedestal erected for her by her divine Founder, she can only compromise herself by the use of human arms, when she has received the arms of God. Peter, whose blow was ill-aimed, proves to us that an Apostle is a poor warrior. He cuts off an ear, and, by his violence, he prevents him whom he so harshly treats from hearing the truth. Besides he exposes himself to the law of retaliation. He who employs the sword is in danger of perishing by the sword. Patience and, above all, charity are the true and only strength of the Church.

Moreover, if by resistance they succeeded in escaping the danger and in putting the wicked mob to flight, what would become of the divine decree concerning the redemption of mankind? A moment before, Jesus had prayed strongly that it might be modified, but Heaven had not heard Him; there is nothing now but to drink the cup prepared by the iniquity of men and the justice of God.

While He is speaking this great lesson to the Apostles, some new-comers, moved by hatred and impatience to see their criminal undertaking promptly carried out, make their way to the front. They are some of the chief priests, captains of the Temple, and ancients of the people. Whether they had but just arrived or had remained hidden in the crowd until the decisive moment, is of little consequence. When He saw them, Jesus addressed them a reproach which is at the same time a solemn protestation of His innocence and of His insulted honour: "Are you come out, as it were against a thief, with swords and clubs? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple and you laid not hands on Me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness. Now all this was done that the

scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Night is favourable for crime; the wicked feel the need of hiding their work from the eyes of men, and from their own eyes, too. None had dared to arrest Jesus in daylight, and this is a proof of His innocence; for, when he who has the power, the opportunity, the authority, and the desire, still fails to act, it is because right is not on his side. Again, why this ridiculous show of swords, of clubs, of soldiers? He is no robber ensconced in His fort to which they have to lay siege. They have only to call upon Him to surrender, and He is at all times ready to follow His enemies wherever they may lead Him. But all this is needed to constitute violence, as night is required to conceal the crime. The hour of hell is come. The king of darkness has procured his co-workers, there is nothing more to do but to suffer the wicked one to accomplish his work and to fulfil to the letter all the prophecies concerning the suffering Messiah. Jesus makes it plain that He will not prevent the spirit of evil from consummating the crime from which will result the salvation of the human race. Thus, by gaining its triumph, sin shall kill itself; and in its own victory it shall be stifled.

The Apostles discouraged by this submission, and, perhaps, frightened, besides, by the increasing fury of the multitude, took to flight. An incident related by St. Mark proves how real the danger was and that there was not a moment to be lost by any who wished to escape. A young man, attracted by the uproar, and who wore nothing but the white linen garment used as a sleeping robe by the Orientals could not at first make up his mind to abandon Jesus in this sad juncture. He started to follow Him, when they began to drag Him off towards the city. The crowd caught sight of him, and at once made ready to use him roughly; but he, overcome with fright,

escaped, leaving his thin garment in the hands of those who pursued him.[22]

Jesus was therefore alone in the power of His enemies. His hands were bound, like those of a malefactor. The crowd in triumph, with shouts and blasphemy, set out on the way back to the city. The chief priests were congratulating themselves on their fortunate capture, and followed the procession. Their orders were to proceed directly to the house of Annas, father-in-law of Caiphas.

[22] From the first ages of the Church it has been thought that this young man was no other than St. Mark, who alone relates this incident. The incident itself is an important one only on the hypothesis that it covertly indicates a well-known personage. In this view we see St. Mark setting his signature too modestly, perhaps, to the Gospel which he bequeathed to Christians. St. Mark's mother, according to the Acts of the Apostles, possessed a house in Jerusalem large enough to serve as an oratory for the first Christians. She might, therefore, well have been the owner of Gethsemane, *the Oil-Press*. It was from this country-house that St. Mark came forth to mingle with the crowd, until the fear of being arrested forced him to run away. The manner in which he suddenly took to flight is quite in keeping with the temperament of the man who abandoned Paul and Barnabas so hurriedly when they entered Asia Minor to undertake a ministry more dangerous than in Cyprus, where the uncle and the nephew were, so to say, at home. Not a few exegetes have thought that this young man was no other than Lazarus.

CHAPTER III

THE ECCLESIASTICAL TRIAL

JESUS IS BROUGHT BEFORE ANNAS—THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION—PETER'S DENIALS—THE TRIBUNAL OF CAIPHAS—THE FALSE WITNESSES—QUESTION AND ANSWER—THE DEATH SENTENCE—*RES SACRA REUS*—WITH THE SERVANTS—THE LAST DENIAL—THE CROWING OF THE COCK—THE MORNING SESSION—REMANDED TO PILATE. (St. John xviii, 12–27; St. Matthew xxvi, 57–75; St. Mark xiv, 53–72; St. Luke xxii, 54–71.)

JESUS was led to the palace of the High-Priests. There at the same time [1] Annas and Caiphas dwelt, the one the former High-Priest dispossessed by Valerius Gratus, the other the High-Priest then in office.

The prisoner was first given into the hands of Annas, who, perhaps, had been the principal organiser of the movement, and to whom belonged the greater influence in the religious questions discussed in Jerusalem. Fiercely patriotic, Annas, or Hananus, had by his imperious nature and his undeniable cleverness, remained the true leader of

[1] This is the best way of explaining how Peter denied his Master during the trial before Annas as well as during that before Caiphas. It is true that he might have remained in the court-yard of Annas' palace, and continued his denials while Jesus was in the house of Caiphas. But in this case we would be doing away with the final result of these denials, which was the look Jesus gave to Peter, and moreover it would be difficult to admit that the crowd which had been present at the arrest did not go with the accused to Caiphas' house. But among those who questioned Peter there was at least one who saw him in the Garden.

Judaism.[2] Five of his sons had exercised the High-priesthood. Joseph Caiphas, his son-in-law, the High-Priest of that famous year, as St. John says, derived from him all his inspirations.

We may imagine the palace in which they lived, with one or several central court-yards common to the various wings of the edifice. In one of these court-yards the servants gathered around a coal fire, which they had hurriedly lighted to warm themselves. In Palestine, even in April, it is severely cold late at night. Jesus was led into the apartments of Annas.[3] The Roman soldiers then withdrew. We see no more of them until the following day. Public order having been secured and the accused having been brought before the religious authority, their mission was ended.

While preparations were being made for assembling the members of the Sanhedrim in Caiphas' quarters, Annas [4] determined to carry out the preliminaries of the proceedings which were about to begin. The crafty old man thought that he must first examine Jesus concerning His disciples and His doctrine.[5] It may be that he supposed

[2] This explains why St. Luke (iii, 2), places him, as High-Priest, in the same rank with Caiphas.

[3] The Synoptics say nothing of this first examination, because Annas had no official authority, and because again, nothing important occurred there.

[4] It is very surprising that certain exegetes, otherwise very clear-sighted, should have allowed themselves to think that, even in the house of Annas, Caiphas led in the discussion, because, say they, the title of High-Priest could be applied only to the latter, as if *St. Luke* iii, 2, and *Acts* iv, 6, were not proof to the contrary, and as if, even in the account in *St. John* xviii, 24, Annas were not mentioned as referring the accused to the jurisdiction of Caiphas.

[5] A great number of commentators think that St. John did not mean to relate the examination of Jesus in the house of Annas, but in the house of Caiphas. To this end, they suppose that after mentioning the father-in-law, at whose house the prisoner made only a brief stop as a matter of form, the Evangelist designates in his quality as High-Priest, the son-in-law. And, in fact, in the context, it is the latter who last receives this qualification. But the great difficulty encountered by this explanation is in verse 24 where

this was a mysterious teaching, reserved for His intimates, and he sought enlightenment concerning the kind of secret society which he believed was the great revolutionary means of the young agitator. Jesus had nothing to say to one who questioned Him without any right to do so. With admirable calmness He eluded the question, and left to others the trouble of answering it: "I have spoken openly to the world," He said, "I have always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort; and in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them who have heard what I have spoken unto them; behold, they know what I have said." Thus, without making any declaration of His innocence, He nevertheless proved it. He reminded them at the same time that although the Sanhedrim and its chiefs had the

it is said that *Annas sent Him to Caiphas.* He therefore had not yet gone there. To overcome this, it was said that this verse had been misplaced by copyists, and that it should come after verse 13, or else that the verb ἀπέστειλεν, *sent,* ought to be taken in the sense of the pluperfect, as if, returning to something which he had forgotten to note after verse 13, St. John observed that Annas had sent Jesus to Caiphas. To this hypothesis there is an important objection, namely: that St. John mentions two distinct trials. He tells us (v. 13) that Jesus was led *first,* πρῶτον, to Annas, which indicates that the *second* trial was before Caiphas, his son-in-law, whose titles and qualities he enumerates. And as a matter of fact (v. 24) the trial before Caiphas is categorically noted. To be sure, he does not mention what took place there, but it is from the house of Caiphas (v. 28) that he shows us Jesus led away to Pilate. Accepting his texts without any desire to distort their meaning, this is what we must read: For him there were two night sessions: one in the house of Annas, which the Synoptics did not mention and which he relates to us; a second at the house of Caiphas of which he says nothing because the Synoptics had given an account of it, but of which he knows the legal outcome since he shows us the Sanhedrim alleging before Pilate (xviii, 31, and xix, 7) the sentence pronounced against Jesus by the religious authority. But we learn that, according to him, in the session before Annas, no capital sentence was pronounced. He knew therefore and indicated that there were two trials, before two different judges, in two different places, in different form and with diverse results. At the house of Annas they sought to compromise the Prisoner by drawing from Him declarations that might serve as a more serious basis for their accusation, which was not sufficiently legitimate from the judiciary point of view. In the house of Caiphas it was the true legal process that took place.

right to examine those who claimed a prophetic mission in Israel, they were nevertheless committing against Him an act of violence as arbitrary as it was useless. They had just seized Him brutally and at night, like a malefactor, whereas He had always taught openly, never refusing to reply to the questions asked by the religious authority. He had never feared the light of day, and He appeals to the testimony, not only of His disciples, but of all those who have heard Him. His doctrine was not for a circle of the initiated, but for the whole world. He spoke usually in public, or, if He taught in private, it was with the desire that what He spoke in the ear should be published from the housetops.

This appeal to the people could not fail to embarrass those who meant to condemn Him without the aid of the people. At any rate, Jesus' clear and simple reply contained nothing that the improvised judge expected. Instead of compromising Him Who had made it, it embarrassed the questioner, and even visibly lessened his competency, by an evasive form which the Accused will not employ either before Pilate or before Caiphas, the two magistrates possessed of the right to question Him.

The situation of Annas was becoming difficult, and the lesson was severe enough to disconcert him. His discomfiture escaped none of those who were listening, and a servant—chance often provides wicked masters with servants as wicked as themselves—judging that an outburst was necessary to preserve the old man's dignity, raised his hand, and, with fierce fanaticism, struck Jesus in the face,[6]

[6] It is commonly supposed that this servant struck Jesus with his hand, but it may be that he struck Him with a stick. The word *ῥάπισμα* derived from *ῥάπις*, a rod, signifies most frequently, in the Greek authors, *Plutarch*, *Themis.* xi; *Herodotus* viii, 59; *Anacreon* vii, 2, a blow from a stick. We shall see later on (*St. Matt.* xxvi, 67) that *ἐκολάφισαν* signifies ill-usage different from *ἐῤῥάπισαν*.

exclaiming: "Answerest Thou the High-Priest so?" The Saviour, unmoved by this violence, simply said: "If I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil; but if well, why strikest thou Me?"

This calmness brought the justice of the accused into prominence, and threatened to insure His triumph if the trial were continued. Annas judged that the question had been ill-put, and that it was time to resort to another tribunal. Besides, he had been informed, perhaps, that the Sanhedrim, hurriedly assembled, was beginning its session. He had Jesus bound, maintaining thus His apparent guilt, and sent Him to Caiphas.

This first procedure had no further result.

By a singular coincidence, at the very moment when Jesus was appealing to the testimony of His disciples, and was saying to Annas, "Ask them," Peter, the chief of the Apostles, questioned by some servants, was replying: "I know not the man!" Although this shameful denial proves the perfect knowledge which the Master had of the future, it is none the less one of the cruelest of the pains that were inflicted that night on His loving, fatherly heart.

When Jesus had surrendered Himself to His enemies, the panic among the Apostles was profound, as we have seen, and they all fled. Peter, however, was not long in regaining a little of his courage, and, starting to follow the criminal procession at a distance, he was eager to witness what would happen. Another disciple was with him. The Gospel does not give his name. It has generally been supposed that it was St. John himself. For it seems quite natural that the beloved disciple should find it hard to abandon the Master, and, in fact, we shall see that he follows Him even to the foot of the Cross. Besides, he had been, for some time, Peter's habitual companion, and the anonymous form in which the account designates him is

quite in keeping with the precautions taken by our fourth Evangelist whenever he speaks of himself.

Arriving at the palace of the pontiffs, the two Apostles were separated for a moment. John went in alone, because he was known to the High-Priest [7]; Peter remained at the door. Two reasons held him there: the first was because he was not sure that he would be allowed to pass; the second was that after his attack on Malchus, he ran the danger of being recognised and treated in keeping with his offense.[8]

In the East, houses of any importance all have a great interior court-yard surrounded by a spacious cloister. Entrance from the street is gained through a monumental gate in which a narrow door opens under the surveillance

[7] By a coincidence the more precious for being unsought, the author of the *Fourth Gospel*, this disciple, whom the High-Priest knows well, is for us the same one who, in writing his *Gospel*, interests himself in all the details of the household of the High-Priest. It is he who gives us the name of the servant whose ear Peter cut off; it is he who will soon tell us of the relationship between one of Peter's questioners and this same Malchus; it is he who knows that the portress was a *young girl*, and that the servants were grouped around a fire of *coals*, which they had lighted to warm themselves.

It has been asked what were John's relations with the High-Priest to whom, according to the *Gospel*, he was personally known. Are we to find their origin in the profession of Zebedee, who, selling in Jerusalem the product of his fishing expeditions, might have been the purveyor of the pontifical household? Or is it better to look for their cause in John's profoundly religious disposition, who, at an earlier date, before becoming the disciple of the Baptist and of Jesus, might have been that of the High-Priest, and was attached to him as the official representative of Judaism? We do not know. It is certain, however, that John had free access to the palace, and that the servants showed him some consideration.

[8] The safety of the two Apostles was going to be very different in the court-yard of the palace, and this will explain the still greater difference in their state of mind. John can go and come without danger. He has no personal apprehensions. They are not ignorant of the fact that he was among the followers of the Accused, but they know that he is acquainted with the High-Priest, and no one will venture to question him. Peter, on the contrary, will enter by special privilege, and he will remain under the burden of a possible accusation because of his act of violence against Malchus. Prudence tells him not to appear in so dangerous a locality, but love forbids him to remain behind the door. The unfortunate man will obey his affections, without sufficiently sounding his weakness. Desirous of seeing the Master near at hand, he will have a close view of his own defects in particular.

of a porter. Through this passes, after making himself known, especially after nightfall, whoever has a right to enter.

When John had gained admittance, he returned to bring Peter in. At a word spoken to the portress, he was permitted to enter. Then, less afraid than his companion, John went directly to the apartment where Jesus was being examined. Peter, remaining alone, hid himself at first in the shadow, to survey the situation; then fearing that too timid an attitude might be compromising, he determined to brazen it out, or, at least, to assume an air of greater assurance. He approached the fire around which the servants were gathered, and seated himself in the midst of them.[9] This self-concealment among the enemy was already the beginning of his fall.

The portress alone knew or suspected this man's secret. She had let him pass only on John's word; and she knew that the latter was a disciple of Jesus.[10] She came into the court-yard to see what he was doing, and, discovering him in the midst of the servants, she concluded that he was not very certain of his right to enter the palace since he remained in such sorry company. This thought caused her some fear of having made a mistake in admitting this intruder, and she tardily fulfilled, with the boldness common to people of her trade, the duty which, in consideration of

[9] An unfavourable criticism has observed that St. John represents the servants as standing: εἱστήκεισαν, whereas the Synoptics represent them as seated; but is it not natural for such a group to have been some seated and some standing? St. Matthew, moreover, after saying that they were seated (v. 58) shows them standing ἑστῶτες (v. 73), and St. Mark does the same. (Compare v. 54 with 69, 70.) As for Peter, if he is represented by St. John as standing, while he is seated in St. Matthew, it is because they speak of different moments. He is seated when the portress speaks to him, and he rises in his agitation caused by this first incident. Then it is that he turns towards the porch (*St. Matt.* v. 71).

[10] The word *also*, in her question, proves that John's relations with Jesus were known to this woman.

John, she had at first neglected. Looking at Peter in the middle of the group: "Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?" she said. This question produced on the Apostle the effect of a lightning-stroke. Would they not recognise in him the daring champion who shortly before had drawn his sword against those by whose side he was now seated? Already every eye is fixed upon him, and with difficulty, turning his troubled face away from the pale light of the fireside, does he succeed in hiding its expression in the shadow. Without further reflection, he at first makes an evasive reply that comes near to being a falsehood: "I know not what thou sayest," [11] he answered. He thought, in his anxiety, that he did not yet compromise, by this subterfuge, either his loyalty or the truth. But the persistent portress does not appear to have left him so soon, and it was to her repeated questions that he must have returned the different denials related by two of our Evangelists: "I am not!" according to St. John; "Woman, I know him not!" according to St. Luke. The first denial, begun with some hesitation, then emphasised, at length became complete in every way, and as impudent as it was public. For, before the whole group, Peter had insistently declared that he did not know his Master. The capricious curiosity of an insignificant maid-servant had succeeded in overthrowing the courage of this presumptuous man, and had given the lie to his strongest protestations.

It was at this moment that Jesus was led from the apartments of Annas to those of Caiphas,[12] that is, He passed from one wing of the palace to another, crossing the court-

[11] *St. Mark* xiv, 68, and *St. Matthew* xxvi, 70, give to this first reply this less positive shade. They are in this probably more exact than the other Evangelists.

[12] St. John says that He was sent to Caiphas after the *first* denial, and St. Luke that He was near Peter, and, consequently, in the court-yard, or

yard. Thanks to the movement made to see the Accused, it seems that Peter, unable, after his first denial, to endure the sight of the Master outrageously bound [13] like a criminal, had sought to beat a retreat. Reaching the colonnade that led to the vestibule,[14] he halted, feeling his courage return to him in the obscurity. It was at this instant that his momentary isolation enabled him to hear, as St. Mark observes, the crowing of the cock.[15] It was after midnight. This crowing reminded him of the Master's prediction, and troubled his soul more keenly than anything else.

To complete his misfortune, the pitiless portress, who followed him with her eye, concluding from his attempts at falsehood that she had made no mistake, began to press him still further with her accusations. This time she addresses herself no longer to him, but to the servants before whom she had been contradicted. Pointing out Peter in the shadow, she cries out that there, indeed, is one of the disciples of Jesus. By this accusation, reiterated so persistently, the unfortunate man finds himself brought back,

under the porch, *at the last*, when He turned upon the unfaithful disciple the look that converted him.

[13] *St. John* xviii, 24, with a chance word, as it were, *ἀπέστειλεν . . . . . δεδεμένον*, depicts the humiliation of Jesus' attitude.

[14] *St. Mark* xiv, 68: *ἐξῆλθεν ἔξω εἰς τὸ προαύλιον*, *he went forth before the court*, combined with *St. Matt.* xxvi, 71: *ἐξελθόντα δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν πυλῶνα*, as he *went out of the gate*, indicates this. He starts out of the court towards the gate and, as he hesitates, his coming and going are noticed.

[15] *St. Mark* xiv, 68. Some have held that, according to an ancient law (*Baba Kama*, ch. vii, last paragraph) cocks were not permitted in Jerusalem, because in seeking for food among the offal, they might bring to light all kinds of impure beasts, capable of defiling unexpectedly, by their contact, both men and the offerings of the Temple. But it has been proven that this Jewish law was passed only later on, and that there were cocks in Jerusalem not only in the fortress Antonia, where the Romans made use of them to mark the watches of the night, but also in the city where, according to the Rabbis, one of them was stoned for having pecked out the eyes of a child who died from the horrible wound. We have already remarked, moreover, that the Jews themselves divided the night according to the crowings of the cock.

willy-nilly, to the first scene of the battle. He returns to the side of the brazier to defend himself again, and to brazen it out by a denial as at first. But the assault upon his cowardice grows in complexity. According to St. Matthew,[16] another maid-servant, who perhaps aided the portress, and shared her distrust of the suspect, intervenes, and with even more assurance than the other, declares to the whole group that Peter was with Jesus of Nazareth. Again he protested, and swore that he did not even know Him. According to St. Luke, one of the bystanders, taking the part of the two servants, began to attack him with the same accusation. With still greater audacity, Peter cried out: "O man, I am not!" Before this explicit denial, which seemed to bear an accent of sincerity, the circle of ushers and servants stood uncertain; but having been called upon to investigate the affair they were eager to be satisfied. The leisure of this wearisome watch, moreover, gave them sufficient time. Then, according to St. John, each one strove to pursue Peter with malicious questions, and to each new question the Apostle responded with another denial.

But attention was now drawn in a different direction. Jesus, conducted into the presence of Caiphas, had found the Sanhedrim assembled there. They must have made haste to convoke so speedily the High-Priests, the Ancients of the people, and the Scribes or Legists who constituted the Supreme tribunal. Nearly all were present.[17] Heedless of the unlawfulness of the meeting at such an hour, they meant to establish a formal procedure from this time

[16] It is remarkable that this same Evangelist alone always doubles the number of persons: two demoniacs at Gothara, two blind men at Jericho, two maid-servants in this instance.

[17] The Synoptics agree on three categories: priests, influential laymen, and rabbis or doctors of the law, who constituted the entire tribunal: *ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον*. We shall see, however, later on, that certain friends of Jesus were not present.

forth. The plan of the hierarchical party was not only to put Jesus to death—an act of violence would have sufficed for that, as it did later on for Stephen—but also to disgrace Him by a judicial sentence, that they might afterwards hand Him over to the Romans as a despicable criminal. To this end there was required a formal judgment, and, consequently, a regular accusation, witnesses and judges. Jesus having, before Annas, appealed to His daily hearers, a few of these had been obtained, but they were all in bad faith and had previously been won over to the hierarchical party.

Caiphas opened the session by questioning these witnesses. But it happened that their depositions, being ill-prepared, were mutually contradictory, and were, moreover, insufficient to warrant a sentence of death. The disappointment of the judges was evident.[18] Finally, two men presented themselves who simultaneously gave this testimony against Jesus: "We heard him say: 'I am able to destroy the Temple of God, and after three days to rebuild it. I will destroy this temple made with hands, and within three days I will build another not made with hands.'" This deposition was false in substance and in form. The authentic words to which they alluded, and which were spoken two years before,[19] assigned to Jesus a part quite different from that now imputed to Him. He had said, not *I can destroy*, nor *I will destroy* the Temple, but *destroy it*; which meant: "You will destroy the Tem-

[18] To condemn a culprit there was required an identical deposition of two or three witnesses examined separately (*Numbers* xxxv, 30, etc.). See Selden, *de Synedriis* ii, 13, 3; and the interesting work of the lawyer, Taylor Innes, *The Trial of Jesus Christ*, Edinburgh, 1899, in which, following the Jew Salvator, *Hist. des Institut. de Moïse*, the author makes a study of the procedure before the religious tribunal and before the Roman tribunal.

[19] It is remarkable that the Synoptics, quoting these words without seeming to know where or when they had been uttered, pay important tribute to St. John's veracity.

ple, and in three days I will rebuild it." His offense might have been described as an act of folly, but in reality He had said nothing against religion. This grievance was therefore insufficient. Besides, in alleging these words they alleged something which they had not understood, and, consequently, proved themselves unjust. For Jesus, Who had uttered them, had never dreamed of raising up again in three days the stones of the Temple completed and embellished by Herod. For Him, the temple was His Body, which He had promised to snatch from the embrace of death, or, better, it was Judaism, which they would destroy in slaying the Messiah, and which He was to rebuild in the Christian form, by raising Himself again on the third day.

To all this He made no reply. It was not worth while, since among the various witnesses some contradicted the evidence of others, and thus their accusations had neither the force nor the authority desired by the Sanhedrim.

The impassive attitude and the silence of the Accused disconcerted the judges more and more. Suddenly Caiphas, exasperated, rose up, and advancing into the middle of the hall: "Answerest thou nothing," he said, "to the things which these witness against thee?" But even this sally drew no further word from the Accused, and Caiphas began to understand that it was not easy to intimidate Him or to force Him out of His reserve. Their rôles seemed to be changed: Jesus had the impassive majesty of a judge, and the High-Priest displayed the feverish excitement of an accused.

To bring the affair to an end by raising, without further evasion, the burning question that lay at the bottom of the whole process, some among the advisers of the High-Priest cried out: "If thou be the Christ, tell us!" And Jesus, explaining by His peaceful reply the sternness of

His silence, retorted: "If I shall tell you, ye will not believe Me; and if I shall also ask you, ye will not answer Me,[20] nor let Me go." Why then give the appearance of a trial to that which is only a plot?

Immediately the High-Priest, taking up on his own account the question asked by those about him, with all the solemnity of which he was capable, cried out: "I adjure[21] thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE BLESSED GOD."

Jesus replied: "I AM."

He was not unaware that such a response was His death-warrant. But the King of Martyrs could not lose so fair an opportunity to show with what courage one must speak the truth, even to the tyrants who hold one's life in their hands. When they had sought to bear Him in triumph and to force Him to inaugurate His reign, He had refused to call Himself the Christ; now when this avowal must lead Him to His death, He formulates it with sublime simplicity. The world, which for so many centuries has awaited this declaration, knows henceforth where to find its Messiah.

To make this profession of faith complete, Jesus, Who, by declaring Himself the Christ, and, more exactly, the Son of God, has borne witness to the Incarnation of God in man, determines also to proclaim the future glorification of His humanity, hypostatically united with the Divinity, at the risk of occasioning the scandal desired by Caiphas. "Nevertheless," He adds, "I say to you, hereafter you shall

[20] This certainly alludes to the questions which Jesus had often put to His enemies without being able to obtain an answer (*St. Mark* xi, 33, *et parall.*; *St. Matth.* xxii, 46, etc.).

[21] The form ἐξορκίζω means exactly: *I call on thee to say under oath* (*Polyb.* iii, 61, 10; vi, 21, 1; xvi, 31, 5), so that the reply was supposed to have been made under oath. Jesus therefore declares Himself the Christ, calling the living God as witness to the truth of His declaration (*III Kings* iii, 24; *Judith* i, 12).

see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power [22] of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." It is not a prisoner, it is a King Whose words they hear. What majesty! What full consciousness of His power! What clear vision of the future! He, the Accused of to-day, will be the Judge of the morrow, and they, the judges, shall stand trembling at His feet as criminals, to respond to a more rigorous justice than that of earth.

In this merciful warning, Caiphas beheld only sacrilegious pretension. His heart, blinded by hatred and religious passion, was incapable of understanding such language, stern and severe as truth. He looked for an excuse or a timid explanation, and he had received, like a thunder-clap, the most courageous and the most categorical of affirmations. Indignant, beyond himself, he began to rend his garments,[23] and to cry out: "He hath blasphemed! What further need have we of witnesses?" His words betrayed, unknown to him, on the one hand his desire to condemn the accused, and on the other, together with the insufficiency of the preceding testimony, the fear of obtaining none more peremptory. The violence of his pretended grief, which publicly tore in pieces his sacerdotal robes, inaugurated the official destruction of Mosaism. That night God Himself was going to rend the veil of the Temple. For the new religion something was required more universal than the breast-plate, the symbolical sign of the twelve tribes of Israel, that covered the breast of the High-Priest, a house of prayer vaster than the Tem-

[22] The text has *τῆς δυνάμεως*, *of the power*, an abstract term intended to bring out more fully the idea of God's omnipotence.

[23] It is true that, according to *Levit.* x, 6; xxi, 4, 10, the priests should never rend their garments either on the occasion of a death, or for any private grief; but here it was question of a public scandal of an unprecedented blasphemy, and the Mosaic law did not provide for such exceptional cases. (Cf. *I Mach.* xi, 71, and Josephus, *B. J.* ii, 15, 4, where the priests bare their breasts by tearing their garments.)

ple, a more universal priesthood. Caiphas, by denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, abdicated his rights as High-Priest. Simon, whom Jesus had long ago surnamed Cephas, or Caiphas, had received them in advance when, on the road to Cæsarea, he had said to the Master: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

"Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy," continued the High-Priest; "what think you?" Thus Caiphas did not bring the reality of the blasphemy into question, he demanded the application of the law, while suppressing all discussion as to guilt. This was arbitrary. But what matters that? All the judges, and their unanimity is frightful in its atrociousness, responded: "He is guilty of death!"

At the same time they brought the session to a close, leaving Jesus to the insults of the crowd. Did they retire to sleep upon their crime until day should come, or did they see to it that the execution of their sentence should be insured? The latter hypothesis seems the more probable since daylight was not far off, and since, besides, it might have appeared to them worth while to lose no time concealing all the illegalities with which their trial was affected. It had been passed at night, hurriedly, by a tribunal which, although legal in number, seemed to have at least excluded the friends of Jesus.[24] Again, the Sanhedrim had accused the prisoner only of blasphemy and of false doctrines; it could inflict disciplinary punishment upon Him, but it could not condemn Him to death. To condemn to capital punishment, the concurrence of the Roman [25] au-

[24] We know, in fact, that at this session the condemnation was pronounced unanimously (*St. Mark* xiv, 64), *πάντες κατέκρινεν*, whereas Joseph of Arimathea, according to *St. Luke* xxiii, 51, voted against this criminal decision, *οὗτος οὐκ ἦν συγκατατεθειμένος τῇ βουλῇ*.

[25] Josephus tells (*Ant.*, xx, 9), how the High-Priest Annas, accused of having assembled the Sanhedrim to pass sentence of death in the absence of the Roman governor, was immediately deprived of his office.

thority was necessary, and this latter would take cognisance only of political crimes. But Jesus had always avoided mingling in politics. They were therefore forced to concoct a way of transforming the accusations brought and accepted against Him. It was in this labour, no doubt, that they spent the hours that preceded daylight.

Jesus passed these same hours quite differently. The judges on departing had left Him in the hands of the servants of the High-Priest. We know that the ancients had respect for the condemned, as they had for the tomb: *Res sacra reus*, they used to say; but this Condemned One received none of that consideration that would alleviate the hour of expiation. Religious hatred multiplied against Him the most unheard-of outrages. After gathering about Him, insulting Him, turning Him to ridicule, the servants began to spit in His face and to strike Him brutally, some with their hands, some with sticks.[26] He remained impassive beneath the first blows of this horrible storm, fulfilling admirably what He had said by the prophet:[27] "I have given my body to the strikers, and my cheeks to them that plucked them; I have not turned away my face from them that rebuked me, and spit upon me. The Lord God is my helper, therefore am I not confounded; therefore have I set my face as a most hard rock." Pagan philosophy had imagined that the most beautiful spectacle offered to the world would be that of a just man calm beneath the ruins of a universe crushing him to death. There is something even grander than that, it is the Just One enduring the most extreme outrages without complaint, and suffering His insulters to live, when, with a gesture

[26] St. Matt. (xxvi, 67) here distinguishes two kinds of brutality, as we have already said, and St. Mark (xiv, 65) says clearly that the servants of the palace, *οἱ ὑπηρέται*, struck Him with rods, that is, with the staff carried by them as a badge of office.

[27] *Isaias* l, 6.

He could have struck them dead. Then they veiled the face of Jesus, and in their malice, forming an infernal circle about Him, they dared to strike Him, each in turn, saying the while: "Prophesy unto us, O Christ; who is he that struck Thee?" When Samson was weary of being the sport of his enemies he summoned all his strength, and, shaking down the pillars of the temple, he buried beneath its ruins those who were laughing at his woe. Jesus summons only His gentleness and His mercy. Silent beneath the blows that fall upon Him, He discovers in His heart courage enough to shield His executioners with His love and His forgiveness.

For a single moment He seems to have interrupted His apparent impassivity in the midst of the outrages which they heaped upon Him; it was when He heard even Peter deny Him. He uttered no word of complaint, but He turned upon the coward such a look of compassion, reproach, and love, that it left his soul in pitiless desolation, and thus brought him back to repentance and to life.

We left Peter in the court-yard in the midst of those who were pursuing him with their malicious questions. He was still in the same place when the Master was led past to undergo there the insults of the servants of the High-Priest and of the Temple. In the heat of the discussion, or, at least, in the energy with which he made his denials, he had forgotten every precaution and spoken in his Galilean dialect and accent. One of the bystanders called attention to this, and they all immediately became of his opinion. What could a Galilean be doing at that hour in the palace of the High-Priest, if he were not a disciple of the Nazarene? The more they thought themselves on the point of convicting him of falsehood, the more they strove to overwhelm him with fresh proofs.

Entirely exposed for nearly an hour [28] to this crowd, which now began to start an uproar, Peter, like a wild animal which the pack is closing up in an ever narrowing and more dangerous circle, finally lost his self-control. His replies became more and more compromising. Thus he obstinately repeated that he did not understand what they meant. Yet nothing was more intelligible than this last grievance that he was a Galilean. His discomfiture, which plainly betrayed his anxiety and indicated his guilt, only excited their eagerness to confound him. They had come close to him, and suddenly one of them gave quick utterance to this formidable evidence: "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" The one who had just spoken was a kinsman of the servant whose ear Peter had cut off. The danger could not be greater. The Apostle, putting aside all evasive replies, took refuge in imprecations, and said with an oath: "I know not this man of whom you speak."

It might have been three o'clock in the morning. At that instant the cock crowed for the second time. At the same moment Jesus, turning away for a second from the blows and the spittle with which He was being covered, gazed at the miserable renegade without saying a word.

What there was in that glance Peter alone could tell. His heart was broken. He saw at once the full depth of his fall. There is nothing harder for an honest soul—and Peter's was such—than to have failed in honour or in friendship in the hour of need. As he saw the bruised countenance of his Master, he could have said to himself: "The servant of the High-Priest struck His face, but I have struck His heart." Covered with shame, he at once

[28] *St. Luke* xxii, 59.

hid his head beneath his cloak [29] and fled from the palace. None had the courage to block the way before such poignant and humble sorrow which henceforward feared no danger, no enemy, not even death, but which fled into darkness and solitude to pour out most bitter and most efficacious tears.[30]

Jesus had prayed that Peter's faith might not be shipwrecked after such a fall. His prayer was heard. Judas, although he acknowledged that the Master was a just and innocent man even in the presence of His enemies, was to end in despair. Peter, after denying Him disgracefully, crying out that he knew not "this man," shall be saved through repentance. The one shall have despaired of pardon, the other shall have relied on penance. This is the work of grace and the mystery of human liberty. The former shall perish accursed by all, the latter shall recover in his tears his right to the supreme government of the Church and to the admiration of future generations. For there is something more surprising than unfailing virtue; it is fallen virtue rising heroically in repentance to remain for ever faithful in its promises and its gratitude.

[29] In this way many, since the time of Theophylact, have interpreted the word *ἐπιβαλών*, while others have understood it as signifying that Peter had *cast a glance* at Jesus, at the moment when the latter was looking at him, or again that he *had rushed* in haste from the palace. We have chosen the first interpretation, because the ancients were accustomed to hide their heads beneath their cloaks when afflicted by a great sorrow.

[30] There is no doubt that the apparent divergences of the four Evangelists, in the story of the denial, present numerous difficulties as we seek to sum them up in one account. We think, however, that we have succeeded in levelling them all by giving a sufficiently clear idea of the scene enacted in the court-yard of the High-Priest. St. John here as everywhere else, must be our guide. He tells the story as a historian and categorically separates the three denials by Peter. The others tell the story as orators, that is, in their reproduction of the oral Gospel in which the preachers were accustomed to present to their popular audiences an especially dramatic picture of the infidelity of the chief of the Apostles. Hence there was less precision in their account. St. Mark does mention the look Jesus gave Peter. It may be that Peter in his preaching, did not have the courage to recall that incident.

Peter, according to an old tradition, never again heard the crowing of a cock without weeping, and his tears wore a furrow in his emaciated cheeks, as if to signify that although God might have forgotten his fall, his love always preserved a most painful remembrance of it.

After the departure of the unfortunate Apostle, the hideous scene of violence and blasphemy continued until sunrise. St. Luke gives positive testimony of this.[31] Jesus, silent and forgiving, thus endured at the hands of His first judges every excess of human malice.

In order to be within the exigencies of the law,[32] the Sanhedrim again assembled at daybreak with more solemnity than during the night, and this time in the usual place of sitting. It was here that they had the Accused brought before them.[33] The whole assembly was composed, according to the Synoptics, of the chief priests, the ancients of the people, and the scribes; for all the Sanhedrists, as St. Mark observes, had come together.[34] Did Jesus undergo in this meeting a second examination like the first, as St. Luke seems to say? Did they merely order the report of the preceding session to be read and ratified as well by the judges as by the Accused? Possibly. In any case, St. Luke, in his account of this sitting, repro-

[31] Whereas the two other Synoptics place the scene of these insults before Peter's last denial, *St. Luke* xxii, 63, indicates that similar outrages took place afterwards.

[32] A sentence of death could not be passed at night. *Sanh.*, 4, 1: "Judicia capitalia transigunt interdiu et finiunt interdiu." Not so with judgments having reference to money matters.

[33] This place, which was in an apartment of the Temple, was called, because of the coloured stones that adorned it, *Lischkath Haggazith*. It was reached, as the lesson of the T. R. indicates, by mounting the *ἀνήγαγον*. In *St. Luke* xxii, 66, it is designated by the name of the assembly itself which gathered there, *τὸ συνέδριον*. On a Sabbath or on a festival-day, the session would have been held in the Beth Midrasch, the synagogue located between the Women's Court and that of the Gentiles (Lightfoot, on *Matt.* xxvi, 3).

[34] He says, in fact, *ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον*.

duces exactly what the two other Synoptics have told us of the night-session with this difference, that, according to him, it is not only the High-Priest who speaks, but the entire Sanhedrim. They seem to have sought simply to put the trial in legal form.

The great desire, after the sentence had been renewed, was, according to St. Matthew, to procure the execution of the capital punishment.[35] A way had to be found to induce Pilate to sanction the sentence of death.[36] The plan prepared by the most clever was discussed. It was to prove a political offence in the religious crime: they could succeed in this way by representing the Christ, the Son of God as Christ, the King of the Jews, and the King of the Jews the enemy of Cæsar.

To produce a deeper impression on the Roman governor, they formed themselves into a sort of solemn procession, and, heedless of their self-humiliation, the Sanhedrim went in a body to Pilate's prætorium.

Jesus followed with bound hands, in the attitude of a condemned prisoner.

Israel was about to hand over his Messiah officially to the Gentiles.

[35] This was the object of the assembly: *εἰς τὸ θανατῶσαι αὐτόν.* They must have the life of the Accused.

[36] They themselves, as they will soon acknowledge, had lost the *jus gladii.* Cf. *Antiq.,* xviii, 1, 1; Tacitus, *Annal.* xii, 54; and the *Talmud, Sanh.,* 24, 2, says: "Quadraginta annis ante vastatum templum ablata sunt judicia capitalia ab Israele."

CHAPTER IV

THE CIVIL PROCESS

The Procurator, Pilate—Judge, but not Executioner—The Examination of Jesus—His Kingship—Innocence Proclaimed—Fresh Charges—Remanded to Herod—The Release of Barrabas—Pilate's Wife—The Washing of the Hands—The Scourging—Crowned with Thorns—Ecce Homo!—The Son of God!—Conscience and Self-Interest—The Last Words: Ibis Ad Crucem. (St. John xviii, 28; xix, 16; St. Matthew xxvii, 11–30; St. Mark xv, 2–19; St. Luke xxiii, 2–25.)

Judæa, as we have already described, lost its independence when Archelaus was deposed, and like Samaria, it was annexed by Augustus to the Roman province of Syria. The government of the country was under the immediate jurisdiction of a procurator. Although nominally dependent on the proprætor or governor of Syria, this official was none the less the true master of the dependency. To his tribunal were brought all capital causes; he passed supreme judgment, and had a body of troops to enforce respect for his authority. Residing ordinarily in Cæsarea, on the sea-coast, he went up to Jerusalem with his soldiers whenever the great concourses of people brought together on the occasion of the Jewish festivals, made the danger of a sedition likely. Perhaps, too, he derived a personal pleasure from mingling in the public rejoicings which the

leading personages of the country, not to mention even great lords from foreign lands, did not disdain to frequent, either through motives of religious conviction or through mere curiosity. The pomp of Roman majesty loved to exhibit itself on such occasions.

The sixth of the procurators who, under Roman domination, administered the affairs of Judæa, was Pontius Pilate.[1] He remained in charge from the year 26 A.D. to the year 37, under the emperors Tiberius and Caligula. Philo represents him as a proud, conceited man;[2] and Josephus,[3] while he does justice to certain qualities which this administrator certainly possessed, declares that he resorted at times to extreme measures, and showed himself full of hatred for the Jewish people. Having in all probability obtained his office through a long-continued habit of humiliating compliance and political trickery, he had a great contempt for other men and, not unlikely, also for

[1] It has been asked whether this personage belonged to the ancient family of the Pontii which began to be illustrious in Roman history with C. Pontius Herennius, the famous Samnite general. He could have become so only as a freedman or as a son of a freedman. The office of procurator being of second rank was never assigned to patricians. It was confided to knights or even to simple freedmen Tacitus says of the Emperor Claudius (*Hist.* v, 9): "Judæam provinciam equitibus Romanis aut libertis permisit." Josephus says distinctly that Coponius belonged merely to the equestrian order (*Antiq.*, xviii, 1, 1: τάγματος τῶν ἱππέων). The surname Pilate, if derived from *pileatus*, in memory of the cap placed on the head of slaves who had been freed (Suetonius, *Nero*, lvii: "Plebs pileata tota urbe discurrit"), would indicate that he was a freedman who had reached an important post by his cleverness, or else by his marriage, if it is true, according to the *Evang. Nicod.* Philo, p. 522, that his wife's name was Claudia Procula, and that she belonged herself by some tie or other to the Claudian *gens*. It is possible on the other hand that this surname Pilate might have indicated either this knight's predilection for the javelin in his military career, as we find in Virgil, *Æneid*, xii, 121: "pilata qua plenis se fundunt portis"; or even some feat of arms that had won a javelin of honour. Inscriptions which may be seen in Orelli, Nos. 3574, 6852, mention a military decoration called the *hasta pura*.

[2] *Legat. ad Caium*, §38, where we find a long enumeration of his iniquities. It is said of him: Ἦν τὴν φύσιν, ἀκαμπὴς, καὶ μετὰ τοῦ αὐθάδους ἀμείλικτος.

[3] Josephus, *Antiq.*, xviii, ch. 2, 3, and 4; *B. J.*, ii, 9, 2.

himself. Fearing above all to displease those who were above him, he treated all others as he might treat a gang of slaves or other degraded beings with whom he needed not to reckon. Temperamentally, perhaps, he would have preferred not to be cruel, but, having no moral principles other than those of a cynical utilitarianism, he gave play to that vice whenever he hoped to derive thereby any personal advantage. Dominated, at heart, by that calculating scepticism which characterises every epoch of subserviency and decadence, he was incapable of following any good impulse if it implied a sacrifice either of his comfort in Palestine or of his favour with the Emperor. Between his own interests and those of Justice he never hesitated. Such was the man before whom they now brought Jesus, the Accused.

Did he reside in the tower Antonia, the powerful fortress which was situated at the northwest of the Temple, and which served as a barracks for the Roman soldiery? A very old tradition says that he did, and we know that the pious faithful still believe that they follow the Way of Sorrows by starting from the point where the ancient tower was built into the cliff near the northern wall of the Haram-es-Cherif, and going on to Calvary. But, not to mention the pomp and splendour affected generally by the Roman governors, especially when they found themselves, as they frequently did during the Paschal festivities in Jerusalem, touching shoulders with the petty kings or princes of the country—a pomp and splendour, be it observed, not likely to be found in a barracks as strictly ordered as Josephus describes it—there are positive reasons for believing that Pilate resided in the palace built by Herod the Great, to the northwest of the upper city, near the towers Mariamne, Hippicus, and Phasael, and designated as the Royal Dwelling, τὰ βασίλεια. There, later

on, we see Florus installed during an uprising. It was before this very palace that the tribunal over which he presided was erected, and at the foot of which appeared, very much as they did in the civil trial of Jesus, the priests and important personages of the city for the purpose of giving an account of the insults which the procurator had received.[4] The majestic edifice, half splendid palace, half redoubtable fortress, seems, indeed, to have been always the official residence of the Roman governors and of a portion of their troops who, in case of a conflict, hastened to render aid to the cohort stationed at the tower Antonia.[5] In any case, there seems to be positive testimony to prove that Pilate was installed there. In the course of the account which he gives of the embassy to Caligula, Philo attests that this procurator having adorned the palace of Herod, of which he had become the proprietor, with golden shields bearing inscriptions in honour of Tiberius,[6] the scandal was so great in the eyes of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, that it had been necessary, in obedience to the orders of the very one to whom they had been consecrated, to transport them to Cæsarea, on the sea-coast, to the temple dedicated to the Emperor. "Herod's palace, however," said the Alexandrine Jew to Caligula, "was only the private residence of the procurators, but now in the Temple, in the Holy of Holies, where the High-Priest enters only once a year, they would put not only their shields, which, indeed, represented no one, but a colossal statue, a sacrilegious insult to the majesty of the true God!" After such testimony we do not clearly see why Pilate should make an

[4] *B. J.* ii, 14, 8. [5] *B. J.* ii, 15, 5.

[6] Philo, *de Leg. ad Caium*, says, §38, that Pilate put these shields *ἐν τοῖς Ἡρώδου βασιλείοις* and, at the bottom of the next page, §39, he observes that this palace of Herod being merely the residence of the procurators, *ἐν οἰκίᾳ τῶν ἐπιτρόπων*, could not be compared with the Holy of Holies where God dwells.

exception in this case and try Jesus in the tower Antonia. In Jerusalem, as well as in Cæsarea,[7] this Roman knight, simple freedman, perhaps, or it may be, son of a freedman, must have felt a proud satisfaction in exhibiting the luxury in which he lived and in exciting admiration for himself in the palace of the kings whom Rome had dethroned. A wall, thirty cubits high, crenelated and bristling with towers, veritable marvels of architecture, protected this superb edifice. In two separate wings, one bearing the name of Cæsar, the other that of Agrippa, immense halls, covered with gold and costly marble, served for banquets and holiday assemblies, while countless rooms, peristyles, court-yards, gardens, adorned with fountains, statues, flowers and lawns, exhibited in profusion in this princely dwelling the most luxurious products of Oriental taste. On the north side of the immense square, near the towers, were the barracks of the Roman legion. The entrance of the palace looked toward the East. It was here that the proprætor sat in judgment when he had to hold court. And it was probably to this spot that Jesus was led by those who came to demand His death.

It might have been about six o'clock in the morning,[8] and the Roman magistrates were accustomed to open court at dawn. Pilate, who the evening before had furnished his soldiers to effect the arrest of the Accused, had doubtless kept himself informed of the incidents of the night. The apprehensions of his wife seem to indicate this. He very probably expected to see the Jewish authorities come at

[7] As for Cæsarea we see, *Acts* xxiii, 35, that the procurator Felix occupied the prætorium of Herod in that city, πραιτώριον Ἡρώδου.

[8] The first two Synoptics and St. John say that the procession arrived at Pilate's palace early in the morning, πρωΐ. If, in Rome, magistrates were accustomed to hold court at daybreak (Seneca, *De Ira*, ii, 7: "Hæc tot millia ad forum *prima luce* properantia quam turpes lites habent!"), for still greater reason must they have maintained this custom in a country where the heat became excessive at an early hour.

an early hour. The latter were surely eager to finish matters promptly, so that no time might be afforded the friends of Jesus to intervene and liberate the prisoner. Besides, the Paschal festival was about to begin, and it was important that all this should be terminated soon enough to enable them to devote themselves freely to the religious practices which it imposed. St. John observes, in fact, that the hypocritical Jews, while raising a tumult around the prætorium, refused to enter, through fear of defiling themselves, which would have prevented them from eating the Paschal meal.

Pilate, yielding to their prejudice, came out upon the terrace of the palace, but not without a certain ill-humour, as is shown by the brevity and sharpness of his first utterance. He was angry to be disturbed in this way and to find, on rising, a kind of revolutionary agitation at the doors of the prætorium. "What accusation bring you against this man?" he said. In entering into the matter without further prelude, he showed his desire to end it as soon as possible, but the idea he had of the case, from what he had learned of it during the night, might also justify his hasty tone, which was, however, fully in harmony with his character. He knew, as St. Matthew observes,[9] that the leaders of the people, in bringing Jesus before him, had been led by a jealous hatred, and he was indignant to see them constitute themselves both judges and party in an affair in which the life of a man was at stake.

Quite naturally, the members of the Sanhedrim had hoped to obtain from the governor, without further discussion, a simple confirmation of their sentence. Their deference for his authority, the demonstration of the mob

[9] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 18.

around his palace, their presence in a body, was indeed sufficient to justify Pilate, should he, without further proceedings, trust to their integrity and to the accuracy of their information. Great, therefore, was their surprise to see the Roman magistrate suddenly annul by his haughty question the proceedings of the night and transform the judges into mere accusers. Vexed at this unlooked for attitude, they replied with insolent vivacity: "If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up to thee." It was clear, then, that they had come to the procurator's tribunal only to offer him the rôle of executioner, reserving for themselves that of judge. Pilate was not deceived, and, seeming to enter into their thought: "Take Him you," he cried with mingled harshness and irony, "and judge Him according to your law." Since they wish to be the only judges of the Accused, they have only to punish Him according to their wise judgment. As for him, he means to execute none but those criminals whose cause he has legally investigated. The Roman law: *Ne quis indicta causa condemnetur*, makes this his duty. Besides, as their authority in the matter has its fixed limits, and as Jesus risks only excommunication, or, at most, a scourging, at the hands of those who condemn Him, Pilate need not worry about the power which he grants them, nor about its consequences.

But in the alternative to which they were reduced, either of placing the Accused on trial before Pilate, accounting as null and void what had been done during the night, or of punishing Him in virtue of the authority they now received (but without putting Him to death, since they have not the right to do so), the Jews preferred to have the whole procedure begun over again. Therefore, in public acknowledgment of their political degradation, they now cry out: "It is not lawful for us to put

any man to death!" Such an avowal must have reminded those who made it of the ancient prophecy of Jacob. Since the sceptre had for ever gone out from Judah, why not seek for the Messiah in the midst of Israel? Either the Patriarch of old had been mistaken, or the Messiah had come. Alas! He was there in their hands, and the riotous mob saluted Him as a malefactor. We see how the chiefs of the people, although ready to abdicate their rights, would not abdicate their hatred. If they suffered the cause to be taken up again by the governor, it was with an attempt to prejudice his judgment; for their reply plainly dictated a sentence of death. But, the sentence of death once procured, every one knew in advance the kind of punishment that would be inflicted. Thus, as St. John observes, they unwittingly embarked upon the course that was to insure the realisation of the Master's prophecies concerning His death upon the Cross. By coming under Roman jurisdiction, the Accused, proved guilty of a capital crime, would have to mount the terrible gibbet. Jewish jurisdiction would have condemned Him to be stoned to death.

At once the ringleaders began to shout out their false accusations. "We have found this man," they cried, "perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he is Christ, the King."[10] Thus, having changed from judges to accusers, they were daring enough to stand forth now as false witnesses. On every occasion Jesus had avoided agitating the people, and invariably, except on the day of the Palms, He had refused the pacific homage of their enthusiasm. Before everybody, and in the Temple, He had asserted the duty

[10] We find this part of the accusation in *St. Luke* xxiii, 2. It is quite useful in enabling us to understand the question that Pilate asks Jesus immediately afterwards. But neither this Evangelist nor the two other Synoptics have the characteristic beginning of the trial. St. John alone has given it to us.

of the subjects of the empire to pay tribute to Cæsar. Finally, the last grievance imputed might be true in one sense, for Jesus had called Himself the Christ; but in the other sense it was calumnious, since for Him this word had no political signification. Before the Sanhedrim, Christ had signified Son of God; before the representative of Cæsar, it will mean King of earth. This is the two-edged sword prepared by the great council. The same title that has caused Jesus to be condemned as a blasphemer by religious judges, is to make Him responsible as a factionist before the Roman tribunal.

Pilate was keen enough to suspect the sudden zeal that inspired Jews to constitute themselves defenders of Cæsar's rights. Unwilling to investigate the case amid the shoutings of the mob, and also, perhaps, through favour of the Accused, he had Jesus brought within the palace, and questioned Him: "Art thou the King of the Jews?"[11] he said to Him. There was in the question a perceptible tone of irony. One can understand why he was surprised to see dreams of imaginary greatness and royalty attributed to a man so humble in appearance. Jesus replied: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of Me?" For, to answer properly, He must know in what sense Pilate meant the word King: did he speak as a Jew or as a pagan? In the theocratic sense, Jesus had to respond in the affirmative; in the political sense, He will say, No. Pilate, who did not grasp the distinction, and who had counted on an explicitly negative answer, exclaims with some humour: "Am I a Jew? Thy own nation and

[11] We can here take account of the omissions in the Synoptics even in Jesus' discourses. While they agree with St. John in giving this question asked of Jesus: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" they simply sum up His reply in the words: "Thou sayest it." This would be very embarrassing for us because of its brevity, had we not the development that precedes it in *St. John*.

the chief priests have delivered Thee up to me: what hast Thou done?" How the pride and the harshness of the procurator suddenly break forth! He, a Roman, to bother himself with the religious affairs of the Jews, to worry himself with the subtle distinctions or the disputes of their schools! No, indeed; he despises them too much for that. He therefore commands the prisoner to come down to facts. But Jesus imperturbably pursues His idea, and distinguishes two kinds of royalty: One is indeed His, namely, that of the supernatural order; the other He leaves to Cæsar, namely, that of the temporal order. "My kingdom is not of this world," He says. And in these words, which many have distorted in order to free the State from the salutary influence of the Church, Jesus does not mean to say that His kingdom is not *on* earth—the faithful who have received His doctrine would protest that they are indeed His subjects—but only that it is not *of* earth. Deriving its origin from on high, it lays hold of souls, and seeks only the spiritual transformation of mankind. It is of an order superior to the perishable contrivances of human politics. But, in asserting its heavenly origin, He implicitly proclaims its earthly universality. That which is from on high must dominate all that which is from below. Had not Daniel[12] prophesied the coming of this royalty, after the fall of the four empires of the world? It is not side by side with the others that this royalty is to live, walled up within an impassable circle, but upon their ruins, with all the nations as its subjects.[13] For there is nothing more logical than to see truth tending invincibly to reform not only the interior, but also the exterior of man, and thus to become universally predominant.

[12] *Daniel* ii, 34, 35, 44; vii, 13, 14.
[13] This is what is said in the *Apocalypse* xi, 15.

"If My kingdom were of this world," continues Jesus, "My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews." This is a clear proof that He is not a king like the kings of earth. He has had no soldiers around Him to defend Him; the Jews have taken Him without the slightest resistance; therefore His royalty cannot in any case be an obstacle to Cæsar's supremacy. "But now," He says, insisting on His denial, "My kingdom is not from hence." "Art thou a king, then?" returns Pilate, in astonishment; and Jesus replies: "Thou sayest it; I am a king; for this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth My voice." . . . He was going to add, no doubt, in conclusion: "He who heareth My voice is My subject." Pilate interrupted Him with the question: "What is truth?" And without waiting for an answer, he went out.

The Roman had asked a question which he did not wish to hear solved. Like the high society of his time and of his country, he took pride in unbelief and in scepticism.[14] What charm could theories of the reality of the spiritual world have for a man of his especially positive temperament? Jesus considers the truth which He has come to announce to the world, as the reason for His royalty, the arms with which He establishes it, and the element necessary for its maintenance. To Pilate, truth is merely an idea, a phantom to which the wise man cannot afford to sacrifice the interests of the present life. At all events, if by his unguarded question he has given Jesus an opportunity for a discourse, he shows Him by rising suddenly and going out that he is not in the humour to listen to Him. He does

[14] Pliny's words are well known, *Hist. Nat.*, ii, 5: "Solum inter ista certum, nihil esse certi." To the class to which Pilate belonged, truth was a word, not a reality, as virtue was for Brutus.

not wish to be preached to, not thinking that he is in need of conversion. All that can be asked from him is that he should judge a cause, and he proceeds to bring to an end this one, the substance of which he clearly perceives. The prisoner cannot be a political agitator, as they called Him; at most He is but a dreamer, a philosopher of a new school. His innocence must therefore be proclaimed before the people, and the affair be brought to a close. "I find no cause in him," he announced to the multitude. Thus, in a brief and haughty form, he rendered to Jesus testimony that was as categorical as it was disinterested.

The latter heard it, for He must have followed to the porch of the palace the judge who was determined to give Him His liberty. His soul doubtless experienced some consolation. Justice was done Him for the first time by the only impartial and authorised man who had the right to judge His cause. But from the midst of the mob there, loud cries at once arose insisting on the accusation which Pilate refused to entertain.[15] It was the ringleaders who spoke. The chief priests, as well as the ancients of the people, thought it their duty, without any sacrifice of dignity, to vociferate themselves fresh accusations. Pilate was surprised and embarrassed. He would have liked to have the Prisoner undertake, henceforward, to refute His adversaries. Jesus was of a different opinion. Once more His silence was full of dignity and authority. Having solemnly replied when questioned concerning His mission, He deemed it most unbecoming to discuss His innocence and His virtue.

"Dost not thou hear how great testimonies they allege against Thee?" said Pilate. "Answerest thou nothing?" The Accused replied not a word, and the governor, who desired only a word from Him in order to save Him, as-

[15] *St. Luke* xxiii, 5: the verb ἐπίσχυον indicates this.

tonished not to receive it, began to admire Him. Here was a pagan recognising in the august Prisoner the ideal man of virtue of whom the philosophers of Greece and Rome had dreamed, greater and stronger in His silence than the whole world in arms against Him. The contrast was striking and decisive: on the one hand the furious mob shouting its accusations that it might get the better of a single man, and on the other the man Himself, absolutely alone, holding in check by His silence the mob that had risen up against Him. Between its fury and His serenity there could be no hesitation, and the Roman governor's practical sense clearly perceived on which side stood right, virtue, and justice.

But, according to the moral portrait of him left us by Philo and Josephus, more ambitious than honest, he had too little love of duty to press his conviction. It may be that a long series of violent acts committed during his government [16] made him timid and incapable of settling the discussion with firmness. It is not rarely that we find that those who have long abused their authority are sometimes afraid to use it even when justice demands, through fear lest their justly energetic action may cause an outburst of general discontent. The people whom they have exasperated by their caprices seem to them unable to endure any further vexation, however legitimate. They are doomed to be weak because they have been inopportunely too strong.

In their accusations the mob endeavoured to represent Jesus as a rebel: He was agitating the people by His teaching and, from Galilee to Jerusalem,[17] nothing escaped His

[16] *Antiq.*, xviii, 3; *B. J.* ii, 9.

[17] *St. Luke* xxiii, 5, alone specifies the details of their insistence on the first accusation, and finds therein a natural transition to Jesus' appearance before Herod, an incident full of interest, but passed over in silence by the others.

revolutionary influence; even Judæa was beginning to feel its effects. In this way they made an allusion to His triumphal entrance into the Holy City. By mentioning Galilee they sought particularly to impress Pilate's mind, for from that country ordinarily came all those agitators whose patriotism strove to shake off the Roman yoke. They who inhabit the mountains generally possess a more pronounced sentiment of national independence, a more glowing imagination and a prouder soul. This news did, in fact, impress Pilate, but from another point of view. It furnished him an expedient. Political men are always fortunate in discovering such. He perceived the possibility of remitting the Accused from the *forum apprehensionis* (under the jurisdiction of which He had been arrested) to the *forum originis* (the jurisdiction of His native place, or of His domicile), which was in conformity with Roman law.[18] Becoming certain, in fact, after a few hurried questions, that Jesus was really a Galilean and subject to Herod's jurisdiction, he hastened to send Him away to the tribunal of His immediate sovereign. This plan afforded the crafty procurator the twofold advantage of getting rid of a delicate matter in which his politics and his conscience were ill at ease, and of grasping an opportunity of reconciliation, by an act of deference, with Herod, whom he had recently offended.[19]

The latter was, in fact, in Jerusalem on the occasion of the Paschal festival, and was probably occupying the palace of the Asmoneans, on the Xystus, a public promenade

[18] Cf. *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, 1, iv, ch. xxii. Thus again, twenty years later, the prætor, Festus, remitted St. Paul to Herod's successor, and later again, Vespasian, sitting at Tarichæum, remitted the accused Galileans to the judgment of Agrippa, whereas, without further information he condemned all the others to death.

[19] It may be that their difference had arisen from some conflict of jurisdiction. See vol. ii, p. 391.

joined to the Temple by a bridge thrown across on the northern extremity of the Tyropœon. At least it was there that later on, under the procurator Florus, Herod Agrippa and Berenice [20] dwelt. The mob turned with their prisoner in that direction.

Herod is not a new personage to us. We have had occasion to appreciate the woful character of this prince who mingled with his debauches some few traces of superstitious religion, and on a sudden allowed himself to proceed even to cruelty if his pleasure demanded it. He was an epicurean with the manners of a Jew. When he saw Jesus approaching, he was really pleased. He had long heard Him mentioned as a celebrated thaumaturgus, and he was eager to see Him accomplish some astonishing works. It seemed to him to be a bit of good fortune thus to pass his leisure hours in receiving this much-talked-of man, this celebrity of the day, and he at once asked Jesus several questions tending, no doubt, to satisfy his curiosity and to amuse the courtiers who stood by him. The man who is a slave to his grosser passions is incapable of suspecting the grandeurs of the supernatural world. Herod saw in this foremost of his subjects only a sort of diviner, or juggling magician. Jesus' humiliation was profound. To this insulting examination He had nothing to reply. He was silent. Pilate, the pagan, had just admired His silence; Herod, the worldly Jew, despised it. At this moment the chief priests and the scribes began to heap their accusations upon Him, but they failed to force Him from His silence, which was more eloquent than any discourse. Herod and his court concluded from this that He was a simpleton or a fool. In derision, the tetrarch had Him

[20] In Josephus, *B. J.*, ii, 15, 1, Berenice goes from her palace to that of Herod the Great to supplicate Florus, and ii, 16, 3, we see Agrippa in the presence of the queen seated on her throne, haranguing, from the very palace of the Asmoneans, the people gathered on the Xystus.

clad with a white robe,[21] and in this condition sent Him back to Pilate.

Such was all the justice he thought it his duty to exact from the culprit, and all the authority he exercised over Him. There was a singular irony in all this, for, though he sought to offer Him a cruel insult, he had succeeded only in doing Him glorious homage. The white robe was, among the Romans, the garment of whoever solicited a dignity: hence the word *candidate*. The kings of the East wore white cloaks that glistened like the snow, as a distinctive mark of their greatness, and over the shoulders of their gods the Persians and Egyptians threw similar white garments. Last of all, they were used as clothing for the foolish. Herod, who without examining the case any more deeply, had commanded Jesus to be thus clad, seemed involuntarily to have acknowledged that the Accused was all these at once, and his derision thus became the official, though unconscious, consecration of the various characters of the Messiah, as true King, as true God, and even as the One sublimely Foolish. For, covered with this garment of fools the Saviour was advancing, in St. Paul's words, to the folly of the Cross.

Since the white robe signified, above all, the innocence of the Accused, the latter found Himself acquitted by a second jurisdiction. For, to be a fanatic, a visionary, a

[21] This is the meaning which the Vulgate gives to the Greek text ἐσθῆτα λαμπράν. As a matter of fact, λαμπρὸς means simply *bright, shining*. Hence many have thought that it should be translated as in the Peschito: *a purple garment*. This is wrong; and, although *St. Luke* ix, 29, and *Acts* i, 10, employ the word λευκός to signify *white*, it is certain that λαμπρός means particularly a brilliant whiteness like that of the light of the sun (*Acts* xxvi, 13), or of heavenly apparitions (*Acts* x, 30; *Apoc.* xv, 6; xix, 8; xxii, 16). It is well known that the white cloak along with purple was the proper apparel of kings. Thus Solomon (*Antiq.*, viii, 7, 3), Archelaus (*B. J.*, ii, 1, 1), Agrippa (*Antiq.*, xix, 8, 2; cf. *Acts* xii, 21), had white garments. The people wore them on solemn occasions (*Antiq.*, xi, 8, 5). Among the Romans, the white garment also had its part (Tacit., *Hist.*, ii, 89; Valerius Maximus, i, 6, 11; Polyb., x, 4, 8).

fool, could not constitute a capital crime. The embarrassment of the Roman governor only increased, therefore, when he beheld Jesus returning. His first expedient had come to nothing. Forthwith he thought of another still more cowardly and no less detestable.

For, resuming his part as judge, he turned to the chief priests, to the ancients, and to the people who surrounded them. "You have presented unto me this Man," he said, "as one that perverteth the people, and behold, I, having examined Him before you, find no cause in this Man in those things wherein you accuse Him. No, nor Herod, either. For he sends Him back to us, and behold, nothing worthy of death is done to Him." The result of the different investigations was therefore juridically acquired: neither in Judæa nor in Galilee had Jesus stirred up a revolution. To condemn Him to capital punishment seemed impossible. "I will chastise Him, therefore," said Pilate, "and release Him." If He is a visionary, He will be cured by this lesson. Such brutal treatment may please the mob, and will leave the governor free from the remorse of a supreme iniquity.

Moreover, that he might be agreeable and crafty to the last, he has just thought of a third expedient, the complement of the second, and capable, it seems, of rendering the decision in favour of the mob without sacrificing the life of the Accused. Here is a plan which he, in his criminal wisdom, has conceived. They demand that Jesus be punished by crucifixion. As far as he can, Pilate will satisfy this demand, but only apparently; in reality, he counts on saving the innocent man. This awful punishment consists of two parts, the flagellation, and the crucifixion itself.[22] The first will be applied severely; the second will

[22] Legally the flagellation preceded the punishment of the cross (Justin xxi, 4; Dion. Cass., xlix, 22). In Josephus, *B. J.*, ii, 14, 9, it is called προαι-

be inflicted on Jesus only morally. They shall treat Him as if condemned—that is understood. By this He shall be disgraced. But, as they are now celebrating the Paschal festival, and as it is the custom, in memory, perhaps,[23] of the deliverance of Israel in the times of the Pharaohs, to release a prisoner, the procurator sees a way of gaining the pardon of the unfortunate Accused. For he has behind the prison-bars a criminal named Barabbas, who was taken and condemned for having taken part in a bloody sedition.[24] By comparing the two prisoners he can certainly preserve the life of Him in Whom he has found nothing reprehensible.

"You have a custom," he says, "that I should release one unto you at the Pasch." And the people, according to St. Mark, cried out: "Yes, it is customary and right." Then, thinking himself almost certain of the success of his plan, Pilate added: "Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus that is called the Christ, the King of the Jews?" It seemed to him impossible that, among all these people, there should not be enough followers of Jesus to ask this pardon for Him, and that the chief priests, impelled by jealousy throughout the whole affair, should not, at the last moment, be abandoned by the mul-

κισμός, *preparatory punishment*, and by Cicero, *Verr.* v, 6: "Media mors." Hence Jesus in His predictions of His approaching death always mentions it before the Crucifixion (*St. Matt.*, xx, 19; *St. Luke*, xviii, 33).

[23] Nothing definite is known concerning the origin of this custom which some date back to the time of the Machabees and earlier, and which others consider to be a benevolent measure employed by the Romans in their desire to render their domination less odious. Some have even thought of referring this custom to the festival of the *Lectisternia* (Titus Livius v, 13), but that has no more connection with the *obligatory custom*, συνήθεια or ἀνάγκη, of which it is question here, than with the alleged passage in Josephus, *Ant.*, xx, 9, 3, where it speaks of brigands demanding, under a threat of putting to death a scribe whom they hold captive, ten of their comrades who had been taken prisoners.

[24] *St. Mark* xv, 7, speaks of the *one called Barabbas* and of *the sedition*, ἐν τῇ στάσει, as if all this were history known to his readers.

titude. There was, in fact, a moment's deliberation. Jesus' friends, mingling with the crowd, had the more favourable side. The comparison between the two condemned prisoners would be decisive, or, rather, it could not even be seriously sustained. At any rate, no one would have ventured to claim that in Jesus the revolutionary spirit was as dangerous as in the homicide Barabbas.

For the sake of greater solemnity, and because he was about to act in virtue of his supreme authority, Pilate, while awaiting the final word of the people's deliberation, had mounted to his judicial seat. It was then that his wife,[25] to whom tradition gives the name Claudia Procula, sent him a message. Naturally pious and lofty-minded, Claudia, like so many other Roman dames of that epoch, must have given some attention to the religion of the Jews, so different from that of the pagans. It has been supposed that she was a proselyte of the Gate. Perhaps the teachings of Jesus had particularly impressed her. Her heart seems to have been secretly inclined towards the preacher of a religion superior to Judaism. At any rate, the news that had been brought to the palace that evening, concerning the arrest of Jesus, had so keenly struck her imagination, that her sleep was full of frightful dreams. It is not a rare thing for the impressions of the eve, reflected in our souls, to reveal to us, in part, the happenings of the morrow. Calpurnia, Cæsar's wife, having had in a dream a mysterious presentiment of the approaching mur-

[25] The ancient law *Oppia* forbade, it is true, the governors to take their wives with them into their provinces which they were going to administer. Under Tiberius, this law fell into disuse, and the motion of Severus Cecina, made in the open senate, failed to re-establish it (Tacitus, *Annal.*, iii, 33). But it was decreed by a senatus-consult that the governors should be responsible for the intrigues and faults of their wives. *St. Matt.* xxvii, 19, alone relates this step on the part of Pilate's wife. In the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, ch. ii, Philo, p. 522, she is called Claudia Procula or Procla. A very ancient legend of the Gauls holds that she was a native of Narbonne. The Greek Church honors her as a saint.

der of her husband, had essayed to prevent him from appearing in the senate the very day he was assassinated. Thus, Claudia, wishing to deter Pilate from participating in the crime plotted by the Jews, sent him, at the solemn moment, a message to communicate to him her apprehensions concerning Jesus. God often gives to wretched men who pay no thought to heaven, pure and devoted companions who, like guardian angels, watch over their steps and strive bravely to snatch them from disgrace and from the abyss. "Have thou nothing to do with that just man," she had said to her husband; "for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

Everything combined, therefore, to increase Pilate's scruples and to prevail, in his conscience as judge, over the shouts which were again raised against the Accused. For, the crowd, urged on by the chief priests and the ancients, cried out: "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas!" Such, at times, is the injustice of popular judgments. Two men are here compared; by the irony of fate, they bear almost the same name, for one is called Jesus, the Son of God, and the other Jesus, the Son of the Father;[26] the former preaches peace to His fellows, the latter had waged against them a homicidal war. But it is for the criminal that they ask the pardon, and for the Just One they decide upon death.

Amazed and worried, the governor, as if he did not believe his own ears, again puts to the crowd the question it

[26] According to some manuscripts, supported by the Armenian version and one Syriac version, Barabbas was also named Jesus. Origen (*in Matt.*, 121) read in some books of his time: "Jesus Barabbas," and he supposes that the name Jesus was suppressed in others, because it was thought intolerable that the criminal in question should bear the blessed name of the Saviour. Barabbas signifies *son of the father*, and is quite common in the *Talmud*. The other spelling of the name, *Barrabas*, which Tertullian adopts (c. *Marc.* iv, 42), and which, according to St. Jerome's commentary on this passage, seems to have been that of the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, gives it a little different signification, *the son of the rabbi or of the priest.*

has already answered with such fury: "What will you then that I do to the King of the Jews, that is called Christ?" And again they all shout together: "Let Him be crucified! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate's policy is thus at an end. Fearing to enforce his will, he must submit to that of the people whom he consults. However, the crime that they are demanding from him is so revolting, that he feels himself obliged to continue to resist. Unfortunately, he does so with a cowardice more and more manifest. It was a rather strange spectacle. A pagan defends the Messiah against the Jews who insult and kill Him! For the third time[27] Pilate, taking Jesus' cause in hand, indignantly exclaims: "Why, what evil hath this man done? I find no cause of death in Him. I will chastise Him, therefore, and let Him go." Thus he returns to his second expedient, merely mentioned for a moment, but not yet put into execution. The mob, whom the thirst for blood deprives of all self-control, when aroused, seeing him weaken, began to insist more and more. "The cross! The cross!" At this fresh outbreak of fury, as well as by the weakness of his own heart, Pilate felt that Jesus was lost. From that moment, amid changes beyond the Evangelists' power of invention, his soul became the scene of a bitter struggle between his convictions and his interests.

He called for water, and washing his hands in the presence of the people, he said: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it." To express, in a way the more intelligible to these people, that he does not see, as judge, any crime to punish, and that he means, as governor, to decline any liability for the crime enforced upon his weakness, Pilate has recourse to a symbolical sign per-

[27] *St. Luke* xxiii, 22, thus clearly relates, ὁ δὲ τρίτον εἶπεν that Pilate proclaimed then, for the third time, the innocence of Jesus.

fectly in keeping with Jewish customs.[28] At the same time, the mob, claiming all the responsibility declined by the Roman, cried out: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" It is needless to say whether or not this sacrilegious defiance was heard by God. The blood of the Just One is still upon the sons of the guilty, and neither time, nor modern civilisation, nor universal scepticism has been able to efface it. With their wealth, their mercantile spirit, their vigorous energy, these people, who are found everywhere, but who reign nowhere, who possess the gold of the earth and are yet unable to buy themselves a country, exist, pass on and die, despised, abused, accursed, as if one might still read upon their brow, written but yesterday in letters of blood, the reason of their misfortune: Deicide.

Pilate, who had this moment declared the unhappy Victim a Just Man, and had stigmatised as an abominable crime the murder demanded by the mob, ordered, however, that Jesus should be subjected to the lashes of the flagellation. This punishment was the immediate preparation for the crucifixion. The governor, therefore, joined in the sanguinary desires of the populace, but not, as we shall see, without a hope of halting on the way, and of snatching the unfortunate prisoner from death at the last moment.

Jesus was scourged publicly before the prætorium, be-

[28] We read, *Deut.* xxi, 6, and Jos. *Antiq.*, iv, 8, 16, that when a murder had been committed in the country, and the murderer was not known, a heifer was slain on the spot where the crime was committed, and each one of the ancients of the nearest city had to wash his hands above the victim and utter these words: "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it," *Sota*, viii, 6. The passages in Herodotus i, 35; Virgil, *Æneid*, ii, 712; Sophocles, *Ajax*, 654, cited to show that Pilate might have acted in conformity with a pagan practice, has no application here. Pilate does not wash his hands after a murder that has been committed, but in view of the murder that is going to be committed, and he means in this way to decline any responsibility for it.

side the tribunal.[29] This treatment was so terrible that frequently the victim expired while undergoing it. The Romans inflicted it sometimes with rods, sometimes with lashes whose leathern thongs were armed with small square bones, or with balls of lead.[30] The culprit was bound to a stake in such a way that his back should be bent and the skin stretched tight. It was probably with lashes that Jesus was scourged, for it belonged only to the lictors to strike with rods, and Pilate, who was only a procurator, had no lictors in his service. The soldiers fulfilled their orders with severity: the barbarism that they displayed in the scene of derision that followed is sufficient proof of this. Besides, Pilate, expecting everything from a movement of pity which he desired to call forth, must have bidden them use no policy with the culprit. But Jesus' love was stronger than all His sufferings, and, beneath the blows that tore His flesh, He kept saying to the justice of His Father, to the fury of hell, to the ingratitude of men: "Ye fatigue Me not; strike on!"

During this punishment, Pilate had withdrawn inside the prætorium to collect himself and to make one last attack upon his conscience. He could not have endured the

[29] We see in *St. Matt.* xxvii, 27, that after the flagellation the soldiers conduct Him into the prætorium, for the purpose of enacting the frightful scene of the derision. *St. Mark* xv, 16, says ἔσω τῆς αὐλῆς, that is, into the *interior court* of the palace. Roman law meant that the flagellation should be administered in public. It is in front of the tribunal of Florus that this punishment is inflicted (*B. J.*, ii, 14, 9). "In medio foro," says Cicero (*Verr.*, v, 62).

[30] Tit. Liv., xxxiii, 36; 2 Curt., vii, 11, 28; Valer. Max., i, 7; Cf. Jos., *B. J.*, v, 11, 1. Most of the details of the flagellation are given by pagan authors. "I, lictor, conliga manus," says Cicero (p. Rab. iv; cf. Tit. Liv., i, 26; xxvii, 13): "In foro medio nudari ac deligari, et virgas expediri jubet," (*Verr.*, v, 62). We would have to cite this entire classic passage of the great orator, for after the rods the punishment of the cross is inflicted. "Adstringit ad columnam fortiter," in Plautus, *Bacch.*, iv, 7, 24. The lash is called "μάστιξ ἀστραγαλώτη," in Athena, 153, and Lucian, *Asin.*, 38. "Flagrum pecuinis ossibus catenatum" in Apul. *Met.* 8. Cf. Dion. Halic. ix; Aulu-Gelle, *Noct. Act.* x, 3.

sight of Jesus insulted by his soldiers even more cruelly than He had been by those of Herod. For whereas the latter had sent Him back clad in white, as a pretender to the crown, the former determined to proclaim His royalty. They dragged Him into the prætorium after calling the whole cohort around Him.[31] They pretended in this way to heighten the solemnity of His coronation by increasing the number of His subjects. For the honour of the Roman name we prefer to believe that Pilate, like the other procurators,[32] had in his service none but auxiliaries levied in the provinces of the empire. Half barbarian, these mercenaries experienced a cruel pleasure in lavishing their insults upon the condemned.[33]

They threw over His shoulders a scarlet cloak, some miserable, ragged, soldier[34] garment found by chance. As a king must needs have his crown, they plaited one with thorns, and pressed it down upon His head. Then in His right hand they put a reed to hold the place of a sceptre, and one after the other they passed before Him, while each one bent the knee and said: "Hail, King of the Jews!" But, whereas it was the custom to kiss the newly consecrated king upon the brow, they struck Him and beat Him about the head with the ridiculous sceptre which they snatched from His hand. Finally, to complete this hateful parody, they now prostrated themselves to adore Him, and again arose to spit upon His face.

[31] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 27, and *St. Mark* xv, 16, mean by ὅλην τὴν σπεῖραν, not the tenth part of a legion, but only those soldiers whom Pilate had brought with him from Cæsarea as a body guard, merely a squad or guard of honour.

[32] Josephus, *B. J.*, v, 11, 1; Plaut., *Most.*, i, 1, 2; Dion. Halic., vii, 69. These auxiliaries had a special hatred for the Jews. *B. J.*, ii, 12, 1.

[33] At least we are led to believe so from No. 5, B, of the *Inscript. Rom. de l'Algérie.*

[34] Some soldiers wore garments of gaudy, motley colours. Plutarch, *Sertorius*, xiv, χλαμύσιν ἀνθίναις; *Philop.*, χλαμύδων διηνθισμένων. See Hermann, *Privatalterth.*, § xxi, 20. It was perhaps a cast-off garment of one of them that had been picked up.

Jesus said nothing.

Was His glance upon the future, contemplating the army of faithful soldiers who would acknowledge Him as the only true King, even with His crown of thorns, as Moses had recognised God in the burning bush; on those martyrs who, giving up their blood for His glory, would be proud from age to age, to renew, by their courageous testimony, the purple cloak of His eternal royalty? Did He behold His sceptre, the reed, striking down the thrones of the kings of earth, and, oh, unheard-of wonder, still standing upright in its powerful weakness, when all other monarchies should have been swept away by revolutions? Was He thinking that He, alone in the world, would have subjects who should love Him as a father, serve Him as a King, adore Him as a God, and that nothing could change, lessen, or discourage this court of honour throughout all future generations? Or was He, with His eyes turned towards heaven, offering Himself to the Father as the lamb caught in the branches and destined to replace Isaac in his sacrifice; as the new Adam gathering the thorns that had grown upon the accursed earth; as the Messiah, in fine, crowned with the leaves that Israel, the fruitless vineyard, was offering to his Master in place of fruits? All this is probable. It is certain that as expiatory Victim and King of the future, He has since presented His august head, adorned with the bloody crown as the sun with its rays, for the adoration of men; and beneath this halo which no injustice can dim, which no victim other than He has purchased, the eyes and hearts of the just salute each day the love and majesty of a God.[35]

[35] Without ever attaining the same odious measure of cruelty, these scenes of derision of feeble and unarmed creatures seem to have been characteristic of the times. Philo, in *Flacc.*, p. 970, relates that in the year 38 A.D., the people of Alexandria, wishing to ridicule Agrippa I, who had been named king of the Jews by Caligula seized a poor fool as he ran in the streets and,

The moment had come for Pilate to make his final essay against the pitiless mob. He went out first and began by pleading the cause of the Victim with a reiteration of what he had already said: "Behold, I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in Him." His last plea contains, therefore, two arguments: he has had Jesus maltreated even more than he had promised, and the people may be content with this harsh punishment; besides, he is more than ever convinced of His innocence. Would they not give him credit for his cowardly complacency and stop the unfortunate affair where it was?

Jesus was behind him, wearing the crown of thorns and the scarlet cloak. Pilate, with a gesture of pity, showed Him to the multitude, and said: "BEHOLD THE MAN!" He was, indeed, the Man-Redeemer awaited by mankind, the Man, pre-eminent, the true Adam, and the Roman procurator had spoken a word whose mysterious sense he was incapable of perceiving. He was, besides, the Man Who was no longer a man, so had the violence of His enemies disfigured Him, and the prophecy of Isaias [36] and that of the Psalmist [37] were terribly fulfilled. He was, in fine, the redoubtable man, whom the chief priests denounced as a dangerous revolutionary, a pretender to royalty and Cæsar's enemy. Pilate, as he looked upon Him, felt an unspeakable compassion, and yet he was not His fellow either in religion or in citizenship. He thought

having set him up on the stage in the gymnasium, transformed him into a king in order to insult him at their leisure. On his head they had placed a paper diadem, on his shoulders a carpet as a cloak, in his hands a reed for a sceptre. While some of them, playing soldier, pretended to mount guard around him, others besought him to administer justice, and all together saluted him with the title of Lord. Mari, Mari! they cried out in Syriac, in mockery of him.

[36] *Is.* liii, 3.

[37] *Ps.* xxiii, 7.

that the enemies of the Accused, softened by this spectacle, would at last grant Him grace. He was mistaken: the heart of the impious and of the false devotee is far less susceptible than the pagan's to the impressions of natural justice, of pity, and of grace. Religious hatred, fostered by Satan, is unpitying; and there are none more hardened than the souls that have looked upon innocence, truth, moral beauty, near at hand, and have failed to appreciate their incomparable excellence.

Meanwhile, this heart-rending sight was in danger of moving the people, who, left to themselves, have kind instincts. The chief priests and their servants put forth their efforts, therefore, to prejudice their reply by shouting out first: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate, incensed by such inhumanity, retorted: "Take Him, you, and crucify Him; for I find no cause in Him." Thus, as the first time, he refused the capital sentence and dismissed the crowd with insufficient authorisation for its homicidal projects. But the cleverest of the conspirators suspected that, although it had suddenly righted itself so proudly, the governor's conscience was none the less ready to capitulate. His apparent energy was artificial. Above all, Pilate feared to displease the people, and the latter was certain finally to prevail over a judge who was unable to enforce the right without hesitation. "We have a law," they replied; "and according to the law He ought to die, because he made Himself the Son of God." These words, which were almost impertinent, insinuated that if the Jews accepted the Roman suzerainty, it was on condition that the Romans would enforce respect for the Jewish law. Besides, they brought the trial back to its first ground by abandoning the political side, which had presented nothing criminal to Pilate.

The new religious accusation, thus formulated, caused a

most unexpected thought to rise in the mind of the procurator. Failing to find, as the Jews did, that these words: "I am the Son of God," on the lips of the astonishing Man Whom he was judging were absolutely blasphemous, he wondered if they did not have some foundation. Was he not in the presence, if not of a true Son of God, at least of a Just Man, a friend of heaven, Whom the gods might sooner or later avenge? A quite natural superstition called up before the pagan's eyes the most gloomy perspectives. He immediately re-entered the prætorium, taking Jesus with him. There, under the lively impression that dominated him: "Whence art thou?" he asked of Him. Pilate's question could have only one meaning. "Art thou of earth or of heaven? Art thou man or God?"[38] He well knew, in fact, that Jesus was a Galilean. If he does not speak in more explicit terms, it is because he dares not venture into a religious domain that is foreign to his education and in which he would risk displaying at once his incapacity. Jesus made no answer. The pagan was in no way ready to hear the Good Tidings. His question came not from a heart in search of the truth, for a moment ago, having asked what it was, he had hastened to go out so as not to learn it. God, all good, as He is, exercises His justice none the less on those who have refused His mercies. Pilate was unwilling to hear Jesus when He spoke, Jesus remains silent when Pilate desires to hear Him. From the general viewpoint of the case, the procurator knew enough concerning the innocence of the Accused to need no new light. The very silence of the latter avowed His divine origin. By not denying energetically the fresh accusation: "He made Himself the Son of God," He acknowledged that it was true. "Speakest thou not to me?" said Pilate in aston-

[38] Cf. *St. John* vii, 28; xviii, 36-37.

ishment; "knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee." The pride of the Roman magistrate emphasises these last words. He has made advances to the Accused, and the latter has signified by His silence that after his unworthy surrender before the mob, he did not deserve a reply. Hence the haughty tone of his remarks. The power of killing or sparing life he certainly has, as shall be proved by the closing word in this procedure; but the right he has not, and hence, the power of which he speaks, being contrary to justice, is simply the power to commit crime and murder. He cannot avail himself of it, except at the expense of his conscience. His pretension is an evident proof that he did not deserve to hear the reply called forth a moment ago. Therefore Jesus does not return to that; but, with impressive majesty, He simply says to the presumptuous Roman: "Thou shouldest not have any power against Me, unless it were given thee from above. Therefore he that hath delivered Me to thee, hath the greater sin." Pilate then is truly master of Jesus, for Rome, the mistress of Palestine, has delegated the power of life and death to her procurator; but even in his authority Pilate remains the instrument of a higher hand that guides all the kings of earth, and to which it belongs to fix the lot of every man, and more particularly that of the Saviour of mankind.[39] It ill befits him to be so proud of it. "Shall the axe boast

[39] We read in *Acts* iv, 28, that Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles, the Jews, combined against Jesus, did nothing more than what God in His counsels had decreed in this affair. The wicked, in their liberty, simply carry out the designs of Providence. This method of explaining a text which in itself is embarrassing, is not without its difficulties, although we adopt it. It may be that we ought to understand by ἄνωθεν, the realm of Satan, which is of a region higher than ours, and then everything would be easily explained. The power over Jesus' life and death has been given to Pilate by the representatives of Satan, the Jews, who accomplish the diabolical work. This is why, in truth, Pilate, although culpable, is less criminal than these abettors of hell.

itself against him that cutteth with it?" the prophet had said,[40] especially now when it is about to strike an innocent One? Instead of boasting of an authority which he is on the point of employing illegally, he ought to regret being the representative of it. When one cannot govern justly, it were better not to be governor.

No doubt, Pilate may discover in the abuse of power which he is going to commit, an extenuating circumstance. It is not of his own free will that he has mingled in this process: he endures it, whereas the Jews alone began it and conducted it contrary to all justice. The Sanhedrim is more guilty than he. Nevertheless, he has his share of the responsibility, and Jesus gives him so to understand with impressive authority. Pilate makes no reply, but with even greater energy he renews his plans and his efforts to liberate the innocent man. The Jews do not even listen to his proposals. What a change of rôles! the judge is become the advocate, and the accusers are the judges. The Victim alone is silent, accepting in advance His iniquitous condemnation. Pilate, however, obstinately manifests that, for the lack of serious grievances, he is inclined towards a solemn acquittal. His rough and violent character is on the point of deciding the debate. The mob believes that all is lost. But at this moment it throws upon the scales its last argument. Though it is clever and triumphant, it is most humiliating for those who dare to bring it forward; for, before formulating it, these proud patriots must needs trample under foot all their dreams of independence and their Messianic hopes. They insure their victory only at the price of their national dignity. "If thou release this man," they cried, "thou art not Cæsar's friend; for whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." This wretched people had lived until

[40] *Isaias* x, 15.

this hour only in the expectation of a deliverer, and, through hate of Jesus, it repels for ever any who may seek to be that liberator. It gives itself to Cæsar, and pronounces a rebel any patriot who will pretend to lift up the flag of independence. Cowardice and folly! Israel constitutes himself the advocate of the rights of Rome in the presence of the procurator who enslaves and crushes him in the name of those same rights.

For this manœuvre could not but prove decisive against so ambitious a politician as Pilate. To sacrifice Jesus or to be lost himself was a pressing alternative which permitted him to hesitate no longer. The mob was right, and had charitably opened his eyes. By tolerating a pretender to the royalty of Israel, he would cease to be a follower of Cæsar, since to make one's self king in a Roman province was to declare one's self the enemy of the imperial majesty.

Of all tyrants we may say that none was more jealous of his authority or more merciless than he in whose hands the reins of the empire were at that time. Tacitus [41] and Suetonius [42] do this much justice to Tiberius. Pilate, with his political perspicacity, saw at once, therefore, that the tempest which was about to break would be threatening and terrible. Should the Emperor learn that in one of his provinces some one had suddenly assumed the title of king, it would be for Pilate a lasting disgrace.[43] Disgrace meant death. Earthy souls wish first of all to enjoy the earth. Position first, conscience afterwards.

Completely unmanned by this last threat, Pilate sum-

[41] *Annal.*, iii, 38: "Majestatis crimen omnium accusationum complementum erat."

[42] *Vita Tib.*, c. lviii: "Qui atrocissime exercebat leges majestatis."

[43] Especially after the other accusations which, according to Philo (*Legat. ad Caium*), and Josephus (*Ant.*, xviii, 14; *B. J.*, i, 2, 8), had weakened his credit.

moned Jesus, Whom he had left in the prætorium. According to the Roman custom the accused himself should hear his sentence. The law prescribed also that the judgment should be rendered in public [44] and from a place that dominated the crowd. This place was called in the Aramean language, *Gabbatha*, or *eminence*. In Greek, the spot where the judge held court was called *Lithostrotos*, or *mosaic* court, because the pavement on which the judge's seat was placed was made of fragments of precious marble.[45] The procurator had mounted the Gabbatha the first time to acquit Jesus, he ascended there the last time to condemn Him.

St. John observes with a deliberate accuracy of detail which is explained by the importance of the events, that it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour.[46]

[44] *B. J.*, ii, 9, 3; ii, 14, 8.

[45] Sueton., *Cæs.*, c. xlvi. It is seen that the two words Gabbatha and Lithostrotos, while designating the tribunal, have not the same meaning. Gabbatha, derived in Hebrew from *gab*, elevation, height, and not from *gib'ah*, indicates the elevated form of the tribunal, and the Greek Λιθόστρωτος, derived from λίθος and στρώννυμι, refers to the pavement of small marble cubes on which it was erected (Jos., *B. J.*, vi, 1, 8 and 3, 2). In Sulla's time, the use of these richly wrought courts was introduced in Rome (Pliny, *H. N.*, xxxvi, 25). Julius Cæsar to heighten the brilliancy of his authority, had this gorgeous equipment brought along on his expeditions. Whenever he halted for encampment, he began by setting up in his prætorium mosaics and marbles such as the consuls had in Rome, and there the judge's seat was erected. The governors followed his example.

[46] We have expounded above our idea of the day on which Jesus Christ was condemned and executed. The present indication which many with patient erudition have explained as referring to Friday, as the preparation not for the festival, but only for the Sabbath of the Paschal week, seems to us, if taken in its most natural sense, to corroborate what we have said. It signifies really the day on which preparation was made for the Feast of the Passover, by the immolation of the lamb, the fourteenth of Nisan. What reason was there for adding τοῦ πάσχα after παρασκευή, if παρασκευή signified simply Friday? No one could be ignorant, after all that the Evangelist had said (xiii, 1; xviii, 28, etc.), of the fact that it was then the Paschal week.

In determining the hour of the crucifixion there is another difficulty. For *St. Matthew* (xxvii, 45); *St. Mark* (xv, 33); *St. Luke* (xxiii, 44), suppose that

When Jesus appeared, Pilate exclaimed, "Behold your King!" Was there in these words nothing but bitter irony with which Pilate avenged himself for the act of weakness which they forced from him, or are we to discover in them a last and solemn homage paid to the Accused? Each meaning has some probability. The cutting speech struck home, and the mob bellowed beneath the humiliation thus inflicted on them. "Away with Him! Away with Him!" they cried, "Crucify Him!" But Pilate, before yielding, pursues his vengeance. "Shall I crucify your King?" It was then that the chief priests, in whom was personified the ancient party in favour of independence, sealing their abdication with one last act of servility, made reply: "We have no king but Cæsar!" They abolished

at midday Jesus was already on the cross for some time, since the darkness was over the earth from the sixth hour until the ninth. Moreover, *St. Mark* xv, 25, is fixed in his opinion when he says quite differently from *St. John* (xix, 14), that Jesus was crucified at the third hour and not at the sixth. To solve this divergency some after Eusebius and Theophylact have thought that in St. John there was an error made by a copyist, that one sign had been taken for another, a gamma Γ for a digamma *F*, and 6 has been written instead of 3. This would be by far the best solution, if it were not too arbitrary. The testimony of certain manuscripts, ℵ, D supp., L, X, Δ, or even of the *Chronic. Alex.* are not of sufficient authority to maintain it. Others have thought that St. John had followed the Roman division of the hours, while his predecessors had followed the Jewish. But is the Roman division historically proved? We have seen, vol. i, p. 277, that for the Orient and in the locality where John wrote his Gospel they counted the hours beginning at dawn and not at midnight, as we have said the Romans were accustomed to do. In *St. John* xi, 9, Jesus remarks that there are twelve hours in a day, and from iv, 6, it would seem indeed that the sixth hour is the very middle of the day, when hunger and thirst make themselves felt. In any case it cannot be admitted that Pilate's sentence, pronounced after the second sitting of the Sanhedrim, after Jesus' appearance before Herod who sought a long time, ἐν λόγοις ἱκανοῖς, to make Him speak, after all the hesitation on the governor's part, the scenes of the flagellation and the derision, was given at six o'clock in the morning. Must we then grant that there is a flagrant contradiction between St. John and the Synoptics? Concerning so memorable an hour is it possible to admit that either he or they were mistaken? Some have endeavoured to understand παρασκευή in *St. John* xix, 14, as meaning not the whole day of the Preparation, but only the part preceding the Sabbath, that is, from three to six o'clock, the moment when the Paschal lamb was immolated, and that St. John thus meant that

thus their old theocracy, and, proud patriots as they were, they asked to be henceforth confounded with the other peoples who were the slaves of the Roman empire. They gave themselves to Cæsar in order to suppress Jesus Christ. The latter would have saved them, the former will massacre them before long, on the very anniversary of the Paschal festival. Pilate, seeing the sacerdotal party surrender thus, no longer hesitates to sacrifice Jesus. So solemn an abdication was, indeed, worthy of that reward.

The fatal sentence was pronounced. The craft, the malice, the fanaticism of the Sanhedrim had succeeded in forcing it from a dishonest magistrate. Pilate spoke to the Accused the Sacramental words: "Ibis ad crucem!"

Pilate pronounced sentence six hours before the Preparation, that is, at nine o'clock in the morning, which would agree with St. Mark. But there is nothing like this in the fourth Gospel. Others relying on the merely approximate determination implied in ὡς or ὡσεί, think they can find a middle term in which the nine o'clock of St. Mark and the midday of St. John would coincide. Although, say they, the day was divided into twelve hours according to the Master's words (*St. John* xi, 9), these twelve hours were more commonly distributed according to established usage, into four parts of three each, the first hour being from daybreak to nine o'clock; the third from nine to midday; the sixth from midday to three o clock; and the ninth from three o'clock to nightfall. The people especially were satisfied to distribute the day with these four starting-points, three of which were determined by the public prayer in the Temple. When, therefore, the Synoptics or popular tradition say that Jesus was crucified at the third hour, they indicate that it was then the second part of the day, between nine o'clock and midday, inclining rather towards the end of this third hour, eleven o'clock for instance, for we must have time to classify the numerous incidents of the morning. St. John, in saying that it was about the sixth hour when the sentence was pronounced, may wish only to note that the third part of the day was about to begin, and that it was near midday. It requires unfailing good-will to be satisfied with this solution. Even though there were no mention in *St. John* i, 39 of a tenth hour, and in iv, 52, of a seventh, in *St. Matt.* xx, 9, of an eleventh, all of which renders the division of the day into four parts very doubtful, it is evident that if the third hour can be made to mean the sixth hour, or vice versa, we can no longer understand the meaning of words. We must either admit that there is a divergence between the oral tradition, gathered by the Synoptics, and St. John, or grant that an error was made by some copyist. At any rate, the final word must belong to St. John.

Section III

The Catastrophe

CHAPTER I

JESUS IS PUT TO DEATH

The Punishment of the Cross—The Procession to Calvary—Simon, the Cyrenean—The Daughters of Jerusalem—The Crucifixion—Pilate's Inscription—The Division of the Garments—Insults of the Hierarchical Party—The Good and the Wicked Thief—The Group of Friends—Ecce Mater tua!—Last Words—Signs and Portents—Testimony of the Dead. (St. Matthew xxvii, 31–56; St. Mark xv, 20–41; St. Luke xxiii, 26–49; St. John xix, 16–31.)

Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment. Invented by a woman, Semiramis, we see it practised first among the Assyrians, the Persians, and the Scythians; then in Egypt and in Carthage. In turn, the Greek and Roman civilisations had adopted it, and, fearful as it was,[1] it had become the ordinary punishment of slaves, *servile supplicium*. According to the law of Moses,[2] a criminal could be decapitated, strangled, burned, or stoned. He was never attached to the cross until after death, and then it was to

[1] Cicero (*in Verrem*, v, 66) justly calls it: "Crudelissimum teterrimumque supplicium."

[2] *Deut.* xxi, 22, 23.

inflict supreme ignominy upon his body. The ferocity of Alexander Jannæus, who had caused eight hundred prisoners to be crucified, was cited [3] as an abominable crime. But a century later the Romans imported into Palestine this method of punishment in use in the other provinces of the empire against rebels and malefactors. From the time of Varus, who executed in this fashion two thousand revolutionaries at the death of Herod the Great, down to Titus, who, after the destruction of Jerusalem, raised beneath the walls of the city as many crosses as wood and space would permit in the neighbourhood, the procurators inflicted this frightful torture upon the political or religious agitators who fell into their hands.[4]

It is remarkable that, while condemning Jesus to the most frightful of penalties, the Roman jurisdiction had allotted Him that very one in which He would be able to retain the longest His full liberty of mind and speech. For the Cross is going to be the bloody rostrum from which He will speak to the world until His last moment of life, and the altar on which He will select at His own pleasure the time to give up His soul to God. Stoned or beheaded, He would have seemed less His own Master, and, in any case, it would have been more difficult for Him to become the standard of the Church, the eloquent sign that was to rise above the world of the future.

I, miles, expedi crucem, Pilate had added, according to the form in use, as complement of the sentence, and the soldiers had just brought up a cross.[5] It was made of

[3] *B. J.*, i, 4, 6.

[4] *Antiq.*, xvii, 10, 10; xx, 5, 10; *B. J.*, ii, 12, 6, and 13, 2, 14, 9; v, 11.

[5] At first the cross had been merely a stake on which the culprit was impaled. Soon afterwards forked trees were used to which the crucified were attached by the shoulders. The shape of these trees seems to have been varied. Sometimes the cross, formed of two stakes crossed, resembles the Greek letter X; again it is made of a single stake with a cross-bar, and reminds one of the letter T. "Ipsa est," says Tertullian (*c. Marc.* iii, 22),

pine, or some other coniferous tree. There are several varieties in Palestine.[6] With odious prevision, the Roman

"littera Græcorum Tau, nostra autem T species crucis." Cf. Lucian. *Judic. Vocal.* xii.

The Fathers of the Church, according as they assigned the one or the other form to the cross of Jesus, have not failed to look for its mysterious meanings. Some saw in Jacob crossing his arms to bless the sons of Joseph (Tertull., *de Baptismo* viii), in the form of the anointing which consecrated the priests, in the two hands joined transversely to impose the sins of the people upon the head of the scape-goat, so many types of the cross, in the form of X, named *crux decussata*. Others supposing that Our Lord's cross of the shape known as *crux commissa*, sought for the symbolism of the Greek letter T which it resembled. But, as this latter signified 300, it recalled for them (Clem. of Alex., *Strom.* vi; St. Paulinus *Ep.* ii) the ark, 300 cubits long, which had saved the just at the time of the deluge. Σ"ταυρὸς ἐν τῳ T, says the Epistle of Barnabas, ix, ἔμελλεν ἔχειν τὴν χάριν.

The most common and a very ancient tradition (Eusebius, *de Vita Constantini*, i, 31), as well as the inscription placed above Jesus' head, would lead one to believe that the instrument of His torture was what has been commonly called the Latin cross, *crux immissa* ✝, that is, the one in which the principal plank rises above the cross-piece. Iren. (*Hæres.*, ii, 24, 4) describes it thus: "Habitus crucis fines et summitates habet quinque, duos in longitudine et duos in latitudine, et unum in medio in quo requiescit is qui clavis affigitur." However, the most primitive representation which we have of the crucifixion, the drawing of the Palatine of Christ with an ass's head, supposes that the cross was shaped like a T, and that the feet of the crucified rested on a support. In any case, the cross recalled (Barnab., *Ep.*, §12; Justin Martyr, *Dial. c. Tryph.*, 89; Tertull. *adv. Marc.*, iii, 18), Moses raising his arms while the Israelites were struggling in the plains of Raphidim (*Exod.* xvii, 12), the ladder of Jacob on which God had leant, or again, the two staffs that were crossed on the Paschal lamb. The brazen serpent, according to Our Lord Himself, had been a figure of the Son of Man crucified. The efforts of apologists to find common in nature the sign of the cross, whether in the four cardinal points, or in the attitudes of the human body at the most solemn moments of life, or finally in certain harmonies of the vegetable kingdom, were called forth principally by the necessity of lessening the scandal of such a death (Minutius Felix, *Oct.*, xxix.) in the eyes of the Gentiles, whereas the symbols in Scripture had been brought forward (Tert., *adv. Jud.* ix) in order to diminish the scandal on the part of the Jews. Among the Egyptians the hieroglyphic sign of the cross was the symbol of life. Cf. among recent works concerning the Cross: O. Zöckler, *Das Kreuz Christi*, 1875; Prime, *Holy Cross*, N. Y., 1877; Dobbert, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Kreuzes*, 1880, and Ansault who published, in 1891, a very curious memoir on the *Cult of the Cross before Jesus Christ*. Some Assyrian and Phœnician jewels are in the form of a cross.

[6] The relics of the true Cross leave no doubt of this. Some, however, think it was of oak, a wood well adapted to this kind of punishment. Cf. Rohault de Fleury, *Mémoire sur les instruments de la Passion*, 1869.

authority always kept a quantity of gibbets in reserve for criminals. The terrible stake had to be neither too light nor too heavy, for the condemned had to carry it or to drag it Himself.[7]

Without the loss of a moment, they had taken from Jesus all the attire of His mock royalty and, clad in His ordinary garments, just as they had been accustomed to see Him when He spoke to the people, He was forced to take the road that led to death. It was right that every one should recognise the man Who was going to be immolated for all. Besides, according to the law, it was necessary to have borne in front of the condemned, or attached to his back, written in large letters, his name and the reason of his condemnation.[8]

Two malefactors, sentenced to the same penalty, escorted the august Victim, as if to complete His humiliation. Soldiers, since Pilate had no lictors, commanded by a centurion, were ordered to proceed to the execution.

The gloomy train, issuing from the palace of the procurator, took the most direct road towards one of the city gates. In order to hasten matters, they omitted the procession in the streets and the mournful pomp usual on such occasions.[9] No time was to be afforded the Galileans

[7] The passage in *St. John* xix, 17, *βαστάζων τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτου*, and the incident with Simon the Cyrenian leave no doubt of this. Pagan authors also attest that such was the custom. Plautus, *Miles Glor.*, ii, 46: "Tibi erit eundum extra portam, patibulum cum habebis." Plutarch, *De Sera Num. Vindict.*, §9: *Εκαστος κακούργων ἐκφέρει τὸν ἑαυτοῦ σταυρόν, κ. τ. λ.* Artemidorus, *Oneir.*, 2, 6: *ὁ μέλλων σταυρῷ προσηλοῦσθαι πρότερον αὐτὸν βαστάδει.*

[8] "Præcedente titulo," says Suetonius, "qui causam pœnæ indicaret." Calig., 32; cf. *Domit.*, 10. Dion Cass., 54, 3, says: "*μετὰ γραμμάτων τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς θανατώσεως αὐτοῦ δηλούντων.* The Jewish custom, if we may believe the *Talmud* (*Sanh.*, 6, 2), was to have the one who was to be stoned preceded by a crier who proclaimed his name, his crime, and the witnesses who had accused him. It was also the crier's duty to invite those who might wish to defend him, to present themselves.

[9] Josephus (*Antiq.*, xx, 6, 3, and *B. J.*, iv, 6, 1) says that ordinarily the culprit was led through all the city. Cf. Dion Cass., 543; Macrobius, *Saturn.*,

to deliver their Youthful Prophet. If, as we have supposed, Pilate was in the palace of Herod the Great, it was towards the northwest and through the gate Gennath, of the *Gardens*, that they proceeded,[10] in order to reach a road leading to the open country.[11] If we suppose that he resided in the tower Antonia, the cortège went towards the west. At any rate, simple piety alone can discover traces of the sacred Victim on the road called the Sorrowful Way which, in the midst of modern streets, is from thirty to fifty feet above the ruins of ancient Jerusalem. Isaias had said that the Messiah should wear the mark of His royalty upon His shoulder, and it is there, in fact, that Jesus supports His cross. Like Isaac, He bears with Him the wood for the sacrifice, but without any hope that heaven's hand may intervene to check the Father's arm or that a victim may rise from the ground to be substituted for Him in the immolation.

In spite of all His courage, the Condemned gave evidence of visible exhaustion. He began to give way beneath the heavy burden.[12] We can see how the emotions of the night, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, must have weakened Him considerably. By His flagging step, the soldiers saw that it was necessary to halt the procession to give Him time to breathe if they wished to reach the place of torture. A man who was returning

i, 10. On this occasion they hurried so quickly that at noon at the latest, Jesus was nailed to the cross.

[10] Among the Jews as among the Romans, the guilty were executed outside the city. Society seemed to cast out those who had outraged her The *Epistle to the Hebrews*, xiii, 12, says that Jesus suffered *without the gate*. St. John (xix, 17) and St. Matthew (xxvii, 32) say the same.

[11] *St. Mark* xv, 21; *St. Luke* xxiii, 26.

[12] A passage in Plautus, preserved by Nonius Marcellus, iii, 183, would incline one to believe that the condemned did not carry the whole cross, but only the cross-piece, *patibulum*, while the principal plank, *crux*, was itself brought along by other means: "*Patibulum* ferat per urbem, deinde affigatur *cruci*." In that case, the cross proper was prepared by the union of the two pieces only on the spot where the execution took place.

from the country had pity,[13] perhaps, on the sufferer's lot. The soldiers at once commanded him to carry the cross. Even though he felt the greatest repugnance to fulfill such an office, he could not prudently refuse. Among conquered peoples the soldier has always been pleased to hector and bully the peasant.[14] Willing or not, therefore, this man took up the Cross. Jesus marched on before him, as if to have it understood that He was going to expiate not His own crimes, but those of humanity who followed Him. Guilty humanity not having to suffer itself, might well, at least, carry the instrument of torture.[15]

The man thus suddenly requisitioned was named Simon, and, personally, or through his father, he had belonged to the colony of Jews transported long before to Cyrene, in African Libya, by Ptolemy-Lagus. He had been called by the surname, Cyrenean. He dwelt, probably, in Jerusalem,[16] and had two sons, Alexander and Rufus, who had their part in the primitive Church.[17] Thus it was that, in the absence of Simon-Peter, another Simon took the place he should have occupied, and it will be an eternal honour for the latter that he was so closely associated in the great

[13] We could not explain why the soldiers, with so many other Jews around them, should have chosen Simon who was not following the procession, but was quietly returning to the city, if he himself did not by his attitude furnish occasion for it. Some have supposed that he was a slave, but without any plausible reasons.

[14] Arrian says (iv, 1): "If a soldier imposes a labour on thee be careful not to resist, or even to murmur; else thou shalt receive blows and shalt lose thy ass into the bargain."

[15] The artists who represent Simon bearing only the foot of the cross, forget that nothing of the kind is to be found in the Gospel, and that, if he had simply raised the extremity touching the ground, instead of helping Jesus, he would only have burdened Him the more.

[16] But for the circumstance that he was returning from the fields and probably from his work there, it would not be improbable that Simon was merely on the way to Jerusalem like so many other Jews who came there from foreign lands to celebrate the Paschal feasts. The Cyreneans had a Synagogue in Jerusalem (*Acts* ii, 10; vi, 9).

[17] *Acts* xix, 33; *I Tim.* i, 20.

act of the Expiation. Were there already in his heart some aspirations towards Christianity, and did he feel for Jesus not merely a human sympathy, but even the affection of a true disciple? We do not know. It is certain, at least, that he bore good fortune to his whole family; for in addition to his sons, his wife[18] also is mentioned with praise among the first Christians. He who had had his small share in the punishment of Jesus was wise enough to seize for himself and for his, a great portion of the benefits of the Redemption.

It might have been midday. The great city, hearing the news of Jesus' condemnation, was eager to gain more accurate information. The crowds gathered from every direction. The curious had joined the procession, and once scattered outside the gate of the city, they sought to hasten on ahead of the soldiers to get a closer view of the Condemned. Women, in particular, thirst for such touching spectacles, and they readily offer even to the unfortunate victims evidences of their sincere compassion. Those who beheld Jesus wept and mourned. Some were lamenting the Young Doctor Whom they had heard in the Temple, and Whose gentleness and kindness had touched their souls. Others, like the women of Galilee who had devoted themselves to the Master's service, wept for their friend. In the midst of these latter, there was one more courageous, though more rudely stricken, than the rest—for in following the Victim she was following her Son—it was Mary, Jesus' mother, whom we shall find again, later on, at the foot of the Cross.

The incident mentioned by St. Luke refers not to these latter, but to the women of Jerusalem. Never initiated into the mysteries of the Son of God, nor associated in His life, they were offering tears to the Young Prophet Who

[18] *Rom.* xvi, 13.

through hate and without cause was about to be immolated. Their grief was the first evidence of sympathy received by Jesus since the beginning of the awful storm, in which His ears had heard nothing but blasphemy and malediction. So, breaking the stern silence He had preserved since the last interview with Pilate, He deigned to reward their natural pity with a wise warning. "Daughters of Jerusalem," He said to them, "weep not over Me, but for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck! Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us! For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?" If they weep at the sight of iniquity committed, they shall weep far more at the sight of its punishment. The woe of one man now stirs them; what shall they say of the woes of a people? Jesus is pleased to remind them that the justice of God is approaching, so that they may be the less scandalised by His patience in the crime that is now being done. If He, because He has consented to bear the sins of others, although just Himself, thus rudely suffers the wrath of heaven, what shall happen to the Jewish people, that withered tree which the vengeance of God is about to strike?

Meanwhile they had reached the place appointed for the execution. The ancients were accustomed to execute their criminals by the side of the most frequented roads, and on the prominent points in the neighbourhood. They sought in this way to inspire in the people a more lively horror of crime, by affording them a close view of its punishment.[19]

[19] Quintilian, *Declam.*, 274; Cicero, *In Verrem*, v, 66; Tacitus, *Annal.*, xv, 44; Titus Livius, viii, 15; Justin., 18, 7; 21, 4; 22, 7. "Spectanda civibus," said Pliny, *H. N.*, xxxvi, 24, 3. Josephus, *B. J.*, v, 11, 1, says: "τοῦ τείχους ἀντικρύ," and 6, 5: "πρὸ τοῦ τείχους."

It is by no means certain that the spot selected to crucify Jesus was the ordinary place for capital punishments.[20] The fact that a rich man, such as Joseph of Arimathea, had a pleasure garden there, would seem to indicate the contrary. However that may be, the slight elevation of ground on which they halted was called Golgotha, or *the Skull, the Head*, probably because the form of the hillock—rocky, grayish, and void of vegetation—evoked the thought of a bare skull.[21] In our modern languages Golgotha is more commonly called Calvary.

While some of the soldiers were preparing the cross and digging the hole in which it was to be planted, others offered the Condemned a stupefying drink meant to render the capital punishment less cruel for Him. It was a mixture of wine and myrrh. In taste, this narcotic greatly resembled gall mixed with vinegar, and also pure absinthe.[22] "To him who is going to his death," says the Talmud;[23] "thou shalt give to drink a grain of incense

[20] The supposition that its name came from the skulls of the executed, which were scattered in this place, has against it some peremptory objections: the first is that the word Golgotha (in Hebrew, *Gulgoleth*, and in Aramaic, *Gulgaltha*, from *galal*, to make round, so that the true name is Golgoltha) signifies the *skull* (*St. Luke* xxiii, 33), or the place of the *skull*, according to the other three Evangelists, but not of the skulls; the second is that Jewish law ordained that the executed should be buried, and did not allow human bones to remain abandoned on a frequented road.

[21] We have some examples of analogous designations. Thus Strabo (xvii, 3) speaks of hills called the *Heads*, κεφαλαί. It is a mistake, however, for Paulus to invoke here the memory of the cypress woods, situated on the road from Cenchreæ to Corinth, and named κράνειον in Pausanias, ii, 2. Cf. *Notre Voyage aux Sept Eglises*, p. 64. The name κράνειον, was given to this sacred grove probably because of the dogberry-trees, κράνεια, of which there were large numbers in the neighbourhood, and not from the conformation of the ground which is almost level in that place.

[22] St. Matthew (xxvii, 34) says: ὄξος μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον, and St. Mark (xv, 23): ἐσμυρνισμένον οἶνον. The other two do not mention this drink. We know that a similar drink was sometimes given to the martyrs. Tertullian (*Jej.* xii) calls it "condito mero."

[23] This practice, authorized in *Prov.* xxxi, 6, was Jewish, not Roman. Cf. *Bab. Sanhedrim*, 42, 1: "Prodeunti ad supplicium capitis potum

in a glass of wine, so that he may lose his consciousness." Jesus tasted of the drink in order to fulfill the prophecy;[24] but He only wet His lips with it,[25] being desirous of retaining all the merit of experiencing, up to His last moment, the awful pains of death.

Then they laid Him on the Cross.

There were two ways of crucifying the condemned: they were attached to the fatal tree sometimes by ropes, sometimes by nails. Both the one and the other were in use in Jesus' time.[26] The cruelty of the executioners preferred the second, and enormous nails pierced the hands and the feet of the Saviour. It is a question whether His feet were fastened by a single nail in one wound; Nonnus and St. Gregory of Nazianzen think they were. Other ecclesiastical authors, in the West particularly, have more commonly followed the opinion of St. Cyprian, who held that there was one nail for each foot: *Clavis pedes terebrantibus.* This saint had in his own day seen, in Africa, the punish-

dederunt, granum thuris in poculo vini, ut turbaretur intellectus ejus." Ordinarily the women of Jerusalem prepared this draught at their own expense.

[24] *Ps.* lxviii, 22.

[25] In this way we can harmonise *St. Matt.* xxvii, 34, where Jesus is said to have tasted the draught, γευσάμενος, and *St. Mark* xv, 23, where we read that He did not take it: οὐκ ἔλαβεν. St. Luke (xxiii, 36), who says that vinegar was offered to Jesus in mockery and before the darkness, seems less exact than the others.

[26] Ausonius, *Cupido crucifixus;* Seneca, *de Vita beata,* xix; Artemidorus, *Oneirocr.,* i, 76; Plautus, *Mostel.* ii, 1, 13, *et passim*; Apuleius, *Met.* iii, 60, etc. Xenophon of Ephesus asserts that in Egypt they simply bound the hands of the crucified. Lucan (vi, 547 and the foi.) speaks of a composite arrangement in which, while nailing the feet and the hands, they bound the body to the cross by ropes. St. Hilary (*de Trinit.,* x, 13) supposes that this same was done to Jesus. He is almost alone in his opinion. However, many Fathers of the Church have understood Jesus' prophecy to Peter: "Another shall gird thee," as referring to the bonds that were to hold the Apostle on the cross. "Petrus ab altero vincitur," says Tertullian (*Scorp.* 15), "cum cruci adstringitur." Pliny (*H. N.,* xxviii, 11) mentions the "spartum e cruce," *the rope of the crucified,* as possessing a magic influence.

ment of the cross inflicted,[27] and a passage in Plautus seems to indicate that he was right.[28]

The actual nailing of the Victim to the Cross was performed on the ground,[29] and it was accomplished with the aid of nails that fastened the four limbs. Jesus was stripped of His clothing and was compelled to stretch Himself in a state of nudity upon the gibbet.[30] His arms spread out generously towards the two branches of the fatal stake. Since the first Adam had ruined the world by putting forth his hand upon the tree of paradise in an act of disobedience, the new Man extended His, in an act of love, upon the tree of Redemption. It was an awful moment for the onlookers, even the most sceptical, when the tree of life, laden with its bleeding fruit, was raised from the ground, and when, slipping down into the hole, it held suspended the Just One, resigned, courageous, forgiving, the supreme reconciler between God and mankind.[31]

[27] Didron observes, in his fine work on Christian iconography that, previous to the thirteenth century, painters represented Christ on the cross indiscriminately, sometimes with three nails, sometimes with four. After that date only three nails have generally been admitted.

[28] *Mostellaria* (Act ii, Sc. 1, Tranion) says: "Ego dabo ei talentum primus qui in crucem excucurrerit, sed lea lege, *ut offigantur bis pedes, bis bracchia.*"

[29] Firmicus Maternus (*Astron.*, vi, 31) says: "Patibulo suffixas in crucem crudeliter erigitur."

[30] Artemidorus, ii, 58: Γυμνοὶ γὰρ σταυροῦνται. In Arrian (*Epict.* iv, 26) we read: "Ut in balneo, vestibus exutus et teipsum extendens, ut solent crucifixi." St. Aug., *De Civit. Dei.* xvi, 2, Athanasius, Ambrose, Origen suppose that Jesus was absolutely naked. In Eusebius *H. E.*, iv, 115, we read that Polycarp, on the funeral-pile, had himself removed *all* his clothing, and that certain women who were put to death (viii, 9, *Mart. Pal.*, 9) had previously been divested of all their clothing παντελῶς γυμνή.

[31] Besides its four branches, the cross had a small joist jutting out from the middle of the vertical and principal piece, like the horn of a rhinoceros, τὸ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ πηγνύμενον ὡς κέρας, according to St. Justin's expression (*Dial. c. Tryph.*, 91). Tertullian (*adv. Nat.*, i, 12) mentions this "sedilis, excessus ubi requiescit qui clavis affigitur," on which the body of the crucified found support; and (*c. Marc.*, iii, 18) "unicornis medius, stipitis palus." (See also Iren., *adv. Hæres*, i, 12.) Otherwise the muscles of the hands would have had great difficulty in sustaining long so heavy a weight.

The two criminals who had been condemned to the same penalty, having been crucified, one on the right, the other on the left, completed the humiliating exhibition. It was a full realisation of the words of Isaias:[32] the Christ was likened to malefactors and reputed with the wicked. This was the moment of His keenest physical pain. A cry went forth from the lips of the august Victim, which has remained the supreme expression of heroism and of sanctity: "Father," He said, "forgive them, for they know not what they do." He therefore illustrated His own teaching to the letter: "Pray for them that persecute you." Sublime magnanimity! He intercedes not only for the soldiers who crucified Him, but for the Jews and the sinners of all ages who caused Him to be crucified.

Through Pilate's care, an inscription was fastened to the top of the cross. It was probably the same that had been carried before the condemned Jesus as He went to His death. Written ordinarily in black letters on a white background, it explained to the passers-by the crime of the crucified.[33] The wording of it, which was the work of the governor himself, contained something hateful to the Jews:

JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.[34]

It is less certain that the feet of the crucified rested in the same way on any support. Gregory of Tours (*de Glor. Martyr.*, 6) is the first perhaps to hold this, and the artists who have followed his information, have given no greater weight to his opinion.

[32] *Is.* liii, 12.

[33] Dion Cassius (liv, 3) speaks of a servant whose master had him crucified, after having made him walk in the public square with the inscription that told his crime. Eusebius (*H. E.*, vii), in relating the martyrdom of Attalus, says: "πίνακος αὐτὸν προάγοντος, ἐν ᾧ ἐπεγράπτο Ρωμαΐστι· Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἄτταλος ὁ Χριστιανός." Cf. Seuton., *Caligula*, xxxviii, 8.

[34] This detail deserves the attention of those who defend the absolute exactitude of the Evangelists, namely, that this inscription is given with three variants, St. Luke and St. Mark simply give: ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων. *St. Matt.* xxvii, 37, adds the name of Jesus. *St. John* xix, 19, also gives the word *Nazarene*. It may be that each of the three languages furnished a different rendering and that the divergence here is due to the fact that the

And these words were written at the same time in Hebrew, the national language; in Greek, the customary language; in Latin, the language of the victorious Cæsars. The royalty of Our Lord was thus proclaimed in the three idioms which represented the several civilisations of the age. God had permitted that a pagan, following a whim of his temper, should testify before the world that the King of the Jews was at the same time King of all the nations. In this suffering, crucified man were fulfilled the ancient prophecies of the patriarchs. Japheth was going to draw near to Sem in order to dwell beneath his tents, and the nations now had but to bow before the Shiloh, or the Messiah Who is come.[35]

The passers-by and all the curious who had hastened from the city to look upon the awful sight, read the sentence and noted its bitter and humiliating irony. The High-Priests were annoyed by it and made their protestations to Pilate: "Write not," they observed, "the King of the Jews, but that He said: I am the King of the Jews." The latter, wearied at last by their demands, recovered, even though late, the harshness which formed the basis of his character. He dismissed them rudely with this reply: "What I have written, I have written." Thus the jealousy of the hierarchical faction failed to hold till the last its advantage over the King of the Jews. His enemies had succeeded in putting Him to death, but they could not destroy His title of royalty. A few years later, events were to prove that the inscription was a prophecy. Preached to all peoples in the three languages which had

Evangelists reproduced all three of them. This, however, is scarcely probable. St. John has the most complete formula. St. Mark's is distinguished by a brevity more Roman than the others. It is he, moreover, who likewise speaks not of *an* inscription put up arbitrarily, but of *the* inscription usual on such occasions.

[35] *Gen.* ix, 27 and xlix, 10.

told the cause of His death, the Crucified One became King of the entire world.

The clothing of those executed, according to Roman law,[36] usually became the property of the executioners. These latter were four in number, according to St. John. Polybius says, in fact, that this was the number of soldiers required for a picket-guard.[37] It may be that there were as many more for each of the two thieves. They immediately thought of dividing the spoils of the victim. The distribution of several bits of the clothing, head-dress, sandals, cincture, took place without difficulty. Jesus' cloak, made in four breadths,[38] was also easy to divide; but the tunic, a mother's patient work, or the gift of some generous heart, was of too great value to become by mere argument the portion of a single man. It was seamless and of the same texture throughout.[39] It was decided that it should not be divided, but should be drawn by lot. A few dice shaken in a helmet,[40] or some other conventional sign, solved the difficulty, and thus were fulfilled the Psalmist's words: "They parted my garments amongst them, and upon my vesture they cast lots." [41] Thus His own people had not even His cast-off garments, and the only goods He possessed here below passed into the hands of pagan soldiers. This done, the soldiers planted their

[36] *Dig.* xlvii, 20; *De bonis damnat.*, 6.
[37] Polybius, vi, 33. See *Acts* xii, 4; Philo, *In Flaccum*, p. 981.
[38] *Deut.* xxii, 12.
[39] Josephus, *Antiq.*, iii, 7, 4, observes that the priest's garment had to be so. Cf. Braun, *de vest. Hebr.*, p. 342.
[40] "Convenere viri dejectamque ærea sortem, Accepit galea," says Virgil, *Æn.*, v, 490.
[41] *Ps.* xxi, 19. In the first part of the verse, according to the Septuagint the Psalmist mentions the division of the outside garments; in the second, the drawing by lot of the garment next to the body, and without which one was naked. There is a visible gradation between these two ideas, and the Evangelist, in noting it, has fully grasped the difference that separates the two members of the Hebrew phrase. Such precise progression in the thought cannot be tautology, as Strauss thought.

lances and, as was their custom,[42] sat down to guard their victim. The anguish of the dying man had no interest for them. They fulfilled the rest of their charge with perfect indifference.

His real enemies were far from assuming this attitude. Their hatred, which had triumphed at last, knew no bounds. While a portion of the people stood at a distance, and gazed upon the tortured man in a stupor mingled with anxiety, the ringleaders of the plot passed in defile beneath His eyes and heaped their last insults upon Him: "Vah!" they cried with a curse and a shake of the head, "Thou that destroyest the temple of God and in three days dost rebuild it, save Thy own self; if Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross!" These foolish men did not understand that it was their own hands that were destroying the temple of God at that moment, by murdering Jesus, and that Jesus would, in three days, restore it by His resurrection. Many—they were the chief priests, the scribes, and the ancients who were shameless enough to come, too, to look upon their Victim—cried out with even more cutting irony: "He saved others, himself He cannot save!" By this they meant either to deny the miracles of Jesus, or to prove that they proceeded from a power other than His. Then, avenging themselves for the inscription which Pilate maintained in spite of them, they added: "If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe in Him." Still others said, with a laugh for His piety: "He trusted in God; let Him now deliver Him, if He will have Him; for He said: I am the Son of God." The soldiers, too, finally shook off their careless attitude, and perhaps, after taking their repast, about two o'clock in the afternoon, they mingled with the

[42] Petron., *Satyr.* cxi, cxii.

scoffers.[43] Their derision was addressed rather to the Jewish royalty itself and to the decadence of this vanquished people, than to the Crucified: "If Thou be the King of the Jews," said they, "save Thyself." And as if they meant to present to the King the banquet-cup, they held up to Jesus the strengthening drink which He had already refused.

In brief, nothing was lacking in the terrible assault of all the wicked, so justly likened by the prophet to untamed bulls, to enraged unicorns, and to roaring lions rushing on to assail the Just One in His abandonment. Of the two thieves crucified on the Saviour's right and left, one, at least,[44] joined his blasphemies to those of the multitude: "If Thou be Christ," said he, "save Thyself and us!" To these words, which so well revealed the selfishness of a base soul, were now added other insulting words. Jesus made no reply. His heroic silence, it may be, as much as His prayer for His murderers, moved the heart of the other brigand.[45] He said to himself that for Him to be able to call God His Father, at the very moment when God was treating Him with such severity, and to be so great and so calm in the midst of the keenest torments, He must be more than a hypocrite and a criminal. "Neither dost Thou," he exclaimed, thus rendering brave testimony to Jesus amid the many indignities heaped upon Him,

[43] Josephus, *B. J.*, v, 11, relates how the soldiers of Titus likewise mocked those whom they had crucified.

[44] Legendary lore (*Acta Pilati* ix, *et seq.*) has given these two thieves the names Desmas and Gismas, or Dimas and Gesmas. The Apocryphal Gospel of the Childhood calls them Titus and Dumachus, and that of Nicodemus Genas and Gestes.

[45] St. Matthew and St. Mark say that both robbers insulted Jesus. Perhaps, after blaspheming both together, one of them reflected, and the first two Evangelists forgot to note it. Perhaps again, grouping the scoffers in classes, they neglected to distinguish the moral dispositions of the good thief, and turned their attentions only to the sentiments of him who joined his invectives to those of the multitude. Evidently, without St. Luke's account we should have been led into error by the other two Synoptics.

"neither dost Thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation?" The others can afford to blaspheme, they are not yet at the point of death; but he who is about to enter into eternity, can he insult God and His Messenger upon the very threshold of the future life? "And we indeed justly," he added, "for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done no evil." There was, in these words, at once, a sign of repentance and an act of homage paid to truth and innocence.

Immediately the sentiment of the kind words he has just spoken, or rather of the good work he has just done, kindles in his soul a spark of hope. It is not unusual for the sacred spark to live even in hearts blighted by the most violent passions, so long as there still reigns in them a breath of natural generosity. "Lord," he continued in a suppliant tone that softened the boldness of his prayer, "remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." He is content with a remembrance, and, criminal as he is, he hopes for it [46] from Him Who has prayed for His murderers.

Even this remembrance might, indeed, gain him something more precious when Jesus shall have entered into His glory. What did the robber understand by this? Was he thinking of the coming of an earthly Messianic Kingdom in the future? This is not probable. Jesus and he are at the point of death. He can only aspire to a happy life away from earth in the world of souls. Whence did this clear and lively faith arise in him? We must admit that he had heard Jesus preach, and that, criminal

[46] The dying Israelite uttered a like prayer to God: "Da portionem meam in horto Edenis, et memento mei in sæculo futuro, quod absconditum est justis." It was thought, too, that a pious man at death could bring with him into paradise him who was present at his last breath. In *Ketub.* fol. 103, we read: "Quo die Rabbi moriturus erat, venit vox de cœlo dixitque: Qui præsens aderit morienti Rabbi, ille intrabit in paradisum." Cf. Wetstein, *In Luc.*, xxiii, 42.

in spite of the Gospel, he retained some hope of rehabilitation by a Saviour.

Jesus answered him: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in paradise." [47] It is not, then, in a far-distant future that the Messianic Kingdom is to come, it is at this present moment. Yet a few hours and death, closing the eyes of them both, shall hasten them on to that higher happiness which shall recompense the unalterable sanctity of the one and the regained sanctity of the other. Thus Jesus on His Cross enters upon His office as Judge. He shows how far the divine mercy will go when called forth by repentance. In a moment, the robber is become a just man, and, thief to the last, in the happy words of St. Augustine, he has succeeded even in stealing heaven.

Meanwhile, through the midst of this indifferent or impious crowd that came to see and to insult the Sacred Victim, a few most faithful friends had made their way to the very foot of the Cross. The soldiers were engaged in eating, drinking, or gaming. From time to time they arose to drive away the devoted women whose lamentations attracted their attention. But it was in vain that any attempt was made to keep them at a distance. They returned again and again.[48] Among them was recognised first the

[47] The word paradise, which comes from a Persian word signifying *park*, passed into the Hebrew tongue (*Eccl.* ii, 5; *Cant.* iv, 8), and signifies a royal garden. The Septuagint employed it in Greek to designate the garden in which Adam was placed. The Rabbis named upper paradise heaven (*II Cor.* xxi, 4), and simply paradise that part of Scheol or Hades in which dwelt the pious men in the bosom of Abraham (*St. Luke* xvi, 23). The place wherein the wicked were enclosed was named the Abyss, Gehenna, the Prison. It is Limbo or the habitation of the just that is spoken of here, for the thief is to enter there that same evening, and we know according to St. Peter (*I Epist.* iii, 18) that Jesus' soul descended first into the temporary abode of the deceased just. The gates of heaven properly so-called, were not opened until the day of the Ascension to Jesus glorified and to humanity which accompanied Him.

[48] This explains why St. John represents them as being *at the foot of the Cross*, while St. Matthew and St. Mark say that they looked on *from afar*.

mother of the Crucified, accompanied by her sister, or sister-in-law, Mary, the wife of Alpheus, or Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen, Salome, the wife of Zebedee, and, finally, John, who discreetly refrains from mentioning either himself or his mother.

It were impossible to imagine a scene more dramatic than that of Mary present during her Son's agony. She looks with the keenest emotion upon that beloved head which she has so often cradled upon her bosom, and which now seeks in vain for some support in its last sleep; upon those lips which she has refreshed by her nursing, and which now are parched by a burning fever; upon the blood that issues from every part and which is hers; and last, upon those eyes, whose mild and penetrating glance is being veiled gradually with the shadow of death. And yet she is not overwhelmed by this grief. The Evangelist represents her as standing. It is the attitude of the sacrificing priest. It befits her thoroughly, for she has certain rights over the holocaust that is being immolated. It is not merely the only Son of the Father Who is slain, it is also the only son of Mary, and the great-souled mother willingly offers Him for the salvation of the world. Giving really something of herself, that which she holds most dear, her child, for the Redemption of mankind, she purchases, by this stern sacrifice, the title of Mother of men, which the Church will make hers for all time. In her is realised the antitype of the first woman who destroyed the world. To her belongs the name *Mother of the living;* for, as the new Eve, fulfilling the ancient prophecy, with her foot she crushes on Calvary the serpent's head. It is in order to make this understood that Jesus, in His farewell words, will solemnly bestow on her the sacramental

They depict different situations, as the brutality of the soldiers changed them every moment.

and prophetic name of *woman*. In His mouth this name is greater and more beautiful than that of mother; it has something of the vastness of the divine plan.

For, rising above all personal preoccupations, the Crucified beholds less the desolation of the mother's heart at the loss of her son, than the magnanimity of the woman who surrenders this son to save all men. He therefore takes this heroic soul in the very flight of her generosity, and, turning her round towards the Christian world which comes into being at the foot of the Cross, He says to her: "Woman, behold thy son!" It was John whom He indicated by His glance; but John, standing beside her, was the representative of the Church. Then speaking to the disciple: "Behold thy mother!" He added. This is the Master's last happy legacy to His own. It was to be not the least precious.[49]

John, following the Master's recommendation, took Mary into his own family and loved her as his own mother. His love was thus the prelude of that other wise, glorious, and lasting filial affection which the faithful held in reserve for her in the future. Those who are astonished or scandalised by our devotion to Mary and by our zeal in perpetuating her cult among us, forget that we have received this kind and sweet mother as a pious trust from the dying Jesus. Our intelligent devotion merely continues the work of the beloved disciple who took Mary, and protected and loved her.[50]

[49] This is the most decisive proof that Mary had no other children. To honour one's parents by giving them the care they merit is not only a duty, but a privilege of which true children would not be deprived. It must not be said that Jesus gave His mother to John because His brothers were non-believers. Jesus Who knew all that was in man and Who had judged Peter in advance as well as Judas, was well able to foresee that the Galileans called His brothers would officially become believers a few days later (*Acts* i, 14).

[50] It is not easy to determine the place where St. John furnished hospitality for this mother who had been confided to him. According to the most ancient tradition, the beloved disciple had a house in Jerusalem (Nicephorus, *H. E.*,

From that moment, death began to seize upon its Victim, while all nature seemed to put on mourning. From the sixth to the ninth hour, that is, from midday to three o'clock, darkness was spread over all the earth. This darkness could not have been the result of a solar eclipse, since the moon was at the full, and at that moment the two heavenly bodies were diametrically opposite. Was it produced by some miraculous atmospheric cause? Or had the earth, before being shaken to its depths, begun by letting forth certain vapours which imperceptibly became dense enough to darken the sun? It matters little; God veiled, as seemed best to Him, the face of the planet which refused to give light to so horrible a drama. Pagan antiquity itself seems to have preserved the memory of this astounding phenomenon.[51] The peoples of all times have thought that there is an intimate relation between nature and humanity, as if, humanity being the soul of the exterior world, the crimes or the woes of the former would necessarily have their counterparts in the commotions of the latter.[52] Is it surprising that God allowed

ii, 42), and Mary dwelt there until the year 48 of our era. It is surprising, nevertheless, if this be so, that St. Paul, after his conversion, spending fifteen days in the Holy City at Peter's house, should declare that he saw no Apostle there besides the chief of the Apostles, except James, the brother of our Lord (*Gal.* i, 19). It seems more natural to suppose that Mary withdrew with John into Galilee. This locality was more in harmony with the needs of her soul. Thus would be explained the small share that John took in the first Apostolic mission beyond the limits of Palestine. As for Mary's sojourn at Ephesus, cf. *Voyage aux Sept Églises*, p. 133.

[51] In Eusebius (*Chron. ad Olymp.*, 202), Phlegon, the author of a chronicle written under the Emperor Hadrian, says that in the fourth year of the 202d Olympiad (785 of Rome): "ἔκλειψις ἡλίου μεγίστη τῶν ἐγνωσμένων πρότερον, καὶ νὺξ ὥρᾳ ἕκτῃ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο, ὥστε καὶ ἀστέρας ἐν οὐρανῷ φανῆναι." Julius Africanus (*Georg. Sync. Chronogr.* i, pp. 610 and 614) also reports that the pagan historian Thallus attributed this darkness to an eclipse, which he demonstrates scientifically to be impossible.

[52] Virgil's famous passage is well known (*Georg.* i, 463): "Sol tibi signa dabit; solem quis dicere falsum audeat? etc." See also Pliny, *H. N.* ii, 30; Plutarch, *Life of Cæsar* lxix; Dion Cassius, concerning Augustus, lvi, 29.

nature to shudder and to spread darkness over Calvary to hide from the angel's eyes the crime that was there being done?

And, strange phenomenon of a higher order, the darkness seemed to invade even the soul of Jesus. To grasp the mysterious meaning of this moral trial, it were necessary to possess the secret of the hypostatic union. But we do not possess it. We must be content, therefore, without understanding the real meaning of the word, to say that the divinity retired still farther into the depths of the Saviour's soul, and put on in the Word the appearance of severity which it wore in the Father and in the Holy Spirit. If the physical pains were intolerable,[53] the moral pain was even more cruelly so. It was the last blow aimed at the Victim by the justice of heaven and the malice of hell. Both struck with violence.

In this moment of inexpressible anguish, the Just One, lovingly, in spite of His deep woe, cried out: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" What fidelity in this love which, scorned, refused, tortured, ceases not to call God His God, thus proving that, beneath the pitiless strokes of divine justice, at the very moment when He is made accursed for us, Jesus has not lost the sense of His intimate and indissoluble union with His Father.

[53] In those who were crucified, the blood gathered, through the arteries, into those parts of the body which were most compressed or extended, in such abundance that the veins were insufficient to conduct it away. The aorta, because of the obstacles which were met at the extremities of the arms and legs, made the blood flow to the stomach and particularly to the head, where it caused, by a violent pressure on the carotids, a very bright redness of the face and a general intolerable pain. What was most frightful was that in this condition the aorta, unable to drive the blood rapidly enough to the extremities of the congested members, ceased to receive the blood sent by the left ventricle of the heart. This latter in its turn did not receive freely the blood that came from the lungs, and the right ventricle itself, unable to pour the blood it produced into the lungs already full, completed the disorder and caused a suffering more cruel than death.

At the word *Eli*,[54] which Jesus uttered in His exclamation, some conclude that He is appealing to the prophet Elias, the protector of the Israelites in times of extreme necessity, according to the popular belief, and they ask each other ironically if Elias is coming to deliver Him. Others, filled with stupor before such agony and, besides, moved by the disturbance of nature herself, cannot hide the trouble of their hearts and tremble in fear lest, if Jesus is really the Messiah, they shall see His precursor, Elias, appearing in a whirlwind to exterminate the guilty.

Almost immediately from Jesus' lips there escaped another cry: "I thirst," He said.[55] In fact, thirst became so terrible in those who were crucified, that it brought on death. Everything contributed to induce it: the physical sufferings, the distention of the entrails, the gradual loss of blood and, in Jesus' case, all the torments and all the trials that had preceded. This cry of bodily pain, following that of pain of soul, excited the compassion of some and provoked the derision of others. While the latter were saying: "Stay, let us see whether Elias will come to deliver Him," the soldiers dipped a sponge into a vessel containing *posca*,[56] a mixture of vinegar and water, which

[54] The phrase quoted by St. Matthew: *Eli, Eli, lemâh shebâktani*, or according to St. Mark: *Elohi, Elohi, lama sabaktani*, does not belong completely either to the Hebrew or to the Syriac, but to the popular dialect spoken in Judæa. Thus, whereas *Eli* was Hebrew, in Syriac it would be: *Elohii*. Shebâktani was Syriac, in Hebrew it would be *Azabtani*. Nothing is more natural to a man than to speak, in moments of great pain or great joy, the language of his childhood.

[55] St. John observes that Jesus spoke these words in order to fulfill the Scriptures. He alludes to *Ps.* xlviii, 22: "And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." For Jesus applies Himself to reproduce all the traits of the Messianic prophecies, and, instead of checking the cruel sensation caused Him by His thirst, He gives it expression by the cry which providentially is to bring about the fulfilment of a latest oracle of the Psalmist. The Evangelist intentionally said: *ἵνα τελειωθῇ*. This cry was the symbol of the thirst for souls that Jesus experienced, as the vinegar was the emblem of the answer which souls make to His generous appeal.

[56] Spartian., *Vita Adriani*, 10. Ulpian: *De erog. mil. annon.*

served to quench their thirst, and, putting it on the end of a hyssop stalk,[57] found there by accident, they held it up to His mouth. When Jesus had tasted of this drink, He said: "It is consummated!" It was the cry of victory; He had drained the chalice to the dregs, had accepted without a single exception, all the sufferings, had surmounted all obstacles, fulfilled every prophecy. At the close of His labour, it was, indeed, permitted Him to give this testimony to Himself that He had refused naught of His heavy task. Like the weary workman who, going to his restful sleep, says joyfully: "Everything is done!" He, ere falling asleep in death, cries out that all is consummated. Then, with perfect liberty, He Who had said: "No man taketh my life, I alone have the power to lay it down, and the power to take it up again," uttered His last cry [58] which was the touching expression of His piety and of His confidence in God: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" [59] and letting fall his head, which He had held upright till the last moment, He gave up the ghost.

Immediately the veil of the Temple [60] was divided into

[57] The word *ὑσσώπος* employed by St. John, has been twisted in many ways under the pretext that the hyssop (*III Kings* iv, 33) is a plant that creeps along the ground, and that St. Matthew, like St. Luke, speaks of a reed. Some have therefore thought that the hyssop had been used to fasten the sponge to the end of the reed. But the parity of the two formulas *περιθεὶς καλάμῳ* in St. Matthew and *ὑσσώπῳ περιθέντες* excludes all these explanations and shows that the hyssop and the reed represent the same thing. It is as if one said a stick, a stalk of hyssop. The supposition that it was *ὑσσῷ* or *ξυστῷ*, which substitute for the hyssop a javelin or a lance, are the more useless since hyssop stalks are easily found of the length of two feet. This would prove only that the cross was not very high.

[58] St. Matthew and St. Mark simply speak of a last cry that Jesus uttered. It is probable that the words, placed on His lips at this moment by St. Luke, complete the information of the first two Synoptics.

[59] A moment ago, in the height of His anguish, He spoke to His God; now He has recovered His soul's serenity, He again beholds the light, the face of the Father who draws near, and He no longer says *My God!* but *My Father!*

[60] The word *καταπέτασμα* indicates the veil that hung before the Holy of Holies (*Exod.* xxvi, 31; *Lev.* x, xi, 23; *I Macch.* i, 22); the other which hung before the Holy is called by the Septuagint the *κάλυμμα*.

two parts from top to bottom. As the High-Priest rent his garments at the announcement of a great sacrilege, so God rent the veil of His sanctuary to stigmatise the crime which His people had committed. He loudly proclaimed that the Holy of Holies, henceforth exposed to all eyes, existed no longer, that the ancient Temple was losing its majesty, and that the figures, ceasing to be veiled in their symbolic meanings, were giving way before the august reality.[61] The only true and certain sacrifice was being solemnly inaugurated upon the ruins of the Mosaic institutions. The earth quaked, rocks were rent,[62] and many tombs were thrown open. The bodies of some of the saints returned to life, and, issuing from their graves, appeared in the Holy City.[63]

Can it be that they felt themselves impelled to pay to the Crucified the homage which the living denied Him? Were they the great line of patriarchs and prophets who came to behold near at hand Him Whom they had so often

[61] *Heb.* vi, 19; ix, 6; x, 19.

[62] The Gospel of the Hebrews, cited by St. Jerome (*In Matt.* xxvii, 51) says: "Superliminare templi, infinitæ magnitudinis, fractum est atque divisum." A passage in the *Gemara* says that forty years previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, the doors of the Temple opened of themselves. Finally, at the epoch of the eclipse mentioned by Phlegon, the city of Nicæa in Bithynia, was partially destroyed by an earthquake.

[63] Some substantial difficulties have been found in this passage of St. Matthew telling of the resurrection of some of the just. It has been asked whether the Evangelist said that they arose before the resurrection of Jesus or only after. In the first hypothesis what would become of St. Paul's testimony calling Jesus: *the first fruits of them that sleep, the first-born from among the dead?* In the second case why connect with the earthquake a resurrection that did not take place until two days after? Would it not be possible to suppose, notwithstanding the explicitness of the Gospel account, that it was not the *bodies* but the *forms* of some of the illustrious dead which appeared to many, to prove that the Man-God in dying had overthrown everything in heaven, on earth, and in hell? Some have pretended that St. Matthew recorded simply the deposition of *several* Jews who thought that they had seen these dead revived. But inasmuch as all nature protested against the awful deicide, it seems logical to admit that the saints themselves came forth from Scheol to pay homage to the Crucified, and suffered themselves to be seen by the pious souls in the Holy City.

saluted from afar? It is certain that nothing was lacking in the sublime picture to draw from each of them a cry of faith and of hope. How familiar to them all was the august physiognomy of the Redeemer under the awful solemnity of death! The rôle of the prophets had been to sketch it line by line in the course of ages, it was their right now to contemplate it in its harmonious ensemble and to admire it in its perfect realisation.

Isaias could see in these limbs tortured by suffering his man of sorrows, and, deeply moved by this blood that covered Him, acknowledge that He had really entered the press of the divine wrath to accomplish there alone the work of salvation.

David looking upon the wounds in His feet and in His hands, counting His fleshless bones, perceiving on His lips the traces of gall and vinegar must have recognised in Him his scion and his Messiah.

In view of this general disturbance of the elements and of souls, at the moment when, in the Temple, the Holy of Holies threw open its mysterious depths, Daniel had only to proclaim the abomination of desolation, Jeremias could salute his pilgrim wandering upon the earth, Ezechiel his shepherd, Joel the Just One par excellence, Malachias the victim of the universal sacrifice.

Moses had but to bow down before the great law-giver of the future, great in all the majesty of His voluntary immolation. Jesus of Nazareth was King by His own blood, and the inscription placed above His head would tell Jacob that although the sceptre had gone out from Judah, one had recovered it, the Messiah awaited of all peoples, and from this time forth ready to inaugurate His Kingdom over the whole universe.

Isaac, Abraham, Sem, Noe, could not mistake the fruit of their race and of their faith, and for Adam there was

nothing now but to take shelter behind this Son of the woman Who had just crushed the head of the serpent. If they passed before the bloody gibbet, they all must needs have proclaimed, putting forth their hands upon the palpitating victim, that the mystery of the Redemption was accomplished.

Among the living, too, several saw a divine protest in this stirring testimony of troubled nature. The centurion who commanded the detachment of Roman soldiers was the first to be moved, and he cried out: "Indeed this was a just man!" But either Jesus was not such, or He was more, for He had represented Himself as the Son of God, and even the centurion might have heard Him twice appealing to His Father on the Cross. And so, leading the soldiers to a fresh act of faith, he again exclaimed with them: "Indeed this man was the Son of God!" It was thus that Jesus, scarcely lifted up from the earth, drew to Himself the first-fruits of the nations.

It is said[64] that, among the Jews, more than one onlooker departed in deep thought or striking his breast in token of remorse. In a more general way, an impression of secret terror spread over all souls, but it awakened no other sentiments. It was Israel as ever under the law of fear, with nothing in his heart of that generosity which, in the pagans, gave birth to faith and love.

The acquaintances and friends of Jesus looked on from a distance at the closing of the drama, either because the soldiers had once more driven them away, or because they wished to remove Mary from so sorrowful a spectacle.

If the chief priests were proud of their triumph, it was not without an admixture of terror, and perhaps their hands trembled as they immolated the victims in the Tem-

[64] *St. Luke* xxiii, 48.

ple, at the very moment [65] when the Holy Victim of their sacrilegious jealousy was expiring on Calvary.

An atmosphere of death, of painful memories and of stupefaction seems to have weighed upon the city for the rest of that day,[66] which consummated the malice and the salvation of the world.

[65] Josephus (*Antiq.*, xvi, 62) says that the preparation for the Passover began at three o'clock in the afternoon *ἀπὸ ὥρας ἐννάτης*. Cf. *Antiq.*, xiv, 4, 3.

[66] If Jesus really died before the beginning of the Paschal solemnity, the 14th of Nisan, and if this day was Friday, as the Evangelists affirm, there are only two dates from which to select the year of His death. The greatest admissible period of time from which we can choose extends from the year 28 to the year 36 of our era. But according to the most recent calculations, cf. Wurm (Bengel, *Archiv*, 1816, ii) and Oudemans, professor of astronomy at Utrecht (*Revue de Theol.*, 1863), the Passover fell on Saturday only in the years 30 and 34 of the Christian era (783 and 787 of Rome). It is between these two dates that we must choose, and the year 30 seems the more probable.

CHAPTER II

THE BURIAL

THE ZEAL OF HIS ENEMIES—THE APPEAL TO PILATE—THE CRURIFRAGIUM—THE OPENED SIDE—BLOOD AND WATER—THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA—NICODEMUS—THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS—THE WOMEN AT THE SEPULCHRE—THE SEALED TOMB—THE DESCENT INTO HELL. (St. John xix, 31–42; St. Matthew xxvii, 57–66; St. Mark xv, 42–47; St. Luke xxiii, 50–56.)

MEANWHILE the close of day was near at hand, and the most solemn [1] Sabbath would begin within two hours. The criminals could not be permitted to remain on the crosses to disturb by their groans or even by their blasphemy the Paschal solemnity. It seemed that if it had belonged in common to the people of God and to the crucified, the Lord's day would have lost something of its sanctity and of its beauty.

Besides, Jesus' enemies were eager to finish even with His corpse, which, in the awful majesty of death, after nature's upheaval, remained their pitiless accuser.

The more quickly to bury both the man and His cause in the same oblivion, they, therefore, went off to ask Pilate, as a favour, to put an end to the victims, so that their bodies, taken down from the cross might be at once placed

[1] *St. John* xix, 31, says that this Sabbath was different from the others: *ἦν γὰρ μεγάλη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνου τοῦ σαββάτου.*

underground. In the Roman custom they would have had to remain on the gibbet until the birds, the wild beasts, and corruption had devoured them.[2] After so short a time the three crucified men could not be dead, for a man of good constitution lived for twelve hours on the cross, and some very robust criminals had been known to survive the frightful torture[3] for more than three days. The Jews were therefore convinced that, at three o'clock in the afternoon, at the moment of the application to the governor, the condemned were still living. They demanded that to the torture of the cross another more expeditious should succeed, the *crurifragium*, which was quite common among the Romans. The legs of the unfortunates were broken with blows of a club, and they were left to die in consequence of this horrible mutilation, when not cruelly thrown still living into the ditch.[4] Ordinarily the finishing stroke was inflicted on the head or on the breast.

Pilate therefore sent to the soldiers the command to break the legs of the crucified, and, says the Gospel, they inflicted this torture first on the two brigands. Although Jesus had every right to be executed before His two neighbours, we may easily explain why He was left till the last. The soldiers had seen Him die, and consequently there was no reason for them to worry about hastening His

[2] In Cicero (*Tusc.* i, 43) we read: "Theodori quidem nihil interest, humine an sublime putrescate"; in Horace (*Ep.* i, 16, 48): "Non pasces in cruce corvos"; and in Plautus (*Miles Glor.*, ii, 4, 19), the slave cries out: "Scio crucem futurum mihi sepulchrum, ibi mei sunt majores siti." Cf. Plutarch, *Cleom.* xxxix.

[3] Origen (*in Matt.* cxi) declares that the crucified lived usually until the evening of the second day. Kosegarten (*Chrest. Arab.*, p. 63) speaks of a Mameluke who though crucified on Wednesday, lived until noon on Sunday, and Langen assures us that in the Soudan the crucified lived generally three days on their gibbet.

[4] See Polybius, *Hist.* I, ch. lxxx, §13, and Ammianus Marcellinus, *Hist.* xiv, 9. Plautus, *Asin.* ii, 4, 68: "Crura, hercle defringentur." Cicero, *Philipp.*, etc., 12: "Quod proverbii loco dici solet: perire eum non posse, nisi crura ei fracta essent. Fracta sunt et vivit."

death. Moreover, they must have had the greatest respect for this extraordinary Victim. So, following the spirit and not the letter of the command sent by Pilate, one of them wishing to insure the death of the august Victim or to hasten it, if, contrary to all appearances, it was not yet an accomplished fact, gave Jesus a blow with his lance, as he would have done to a man of honour. He could not bring himself to bruise Him shamefully like a slave. It was naturally at the heart that the soldier aimed, as the last resort of life. Besides, standing in front of the crucified to watch attentively if He were still breathing, and holding the lance in his right hand, he had to strike the left side.

The wound was deep, for, a few days later, we shall see Jesus inviting Thomas to put his hand into it. The strong-armed soldier had no reason for being gentle with his victim. If, in striking Him, he had obeyed a sentiment of respect and compassion—what is said of the centurion and his men justifies this supposition [5]—the finishing stroke must have been sufficiently vigorous to deliver Jesus at once from His last sufferings. If he acted through brutality, the violence of the blow is all the more certain.[6]

A mixture of blood and water leaped forth from the gaping wound. This seemed strange to the onlookers, and in particular to St. John, who attests it with special solemnity. "He that saw it hath given testimony," he says; "and his testimony is true. And he knoweth that he saith true; that you also may believe." As a matter of fact, medicine has encountered no case analogous to this. But it cannot without temerity assert that Jesus, with His per-

[5] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 54; *St. Mark* xv, 39; *St. Luke* xxiii, 47.

[6] The verb *νύσσειν* indicates a cut with a point, and has its synonym in v. 37, *κεντεῖν*. Both ordinarily signify a deep and violently inflicted wound. Homer, *Il.* v, 45, 47; Josephus, *B. J.*, iii, 7, 35.

fectly delicate nature and with the superhuman weight of suffering which He had borne, did not constitute an exception. The lively pangs which He had experienced might have formed aqueous deposits around the heart. The rupture of an important blood vessel, after the great cry that preceded His last breath had also, perhaps, gathered in His chest a quantity of still fluid blood, which was beginning to be transformed into serum and blackish blood. The very position of the body was sufficient to allow it to flow through a wound inflicted from below. Science although declaring that blood ceases to be a fluid within an hour after death, unless death be caused by a nervous fever or by asphyxia, will not tell whether or not Jesus had been dead for more than an hour when He received the blow of the lance, nor declare the physiological cause of so precipitous an end.[7] The most certain thing about it is the testimony of the Evangelist who, greatly astonished, beheld this strange phenomenon with his own eyes. He is pleased to attest it, both to demonstrate the profound revolution which Jesus' exceptionally delicate nature had undergone,[8] and to show that the Master's body was not destined for corruption. For, even the usual decomposition of corpses was not produced in Him, and the blood, although in a peculiar condition, since it was no longer circulating, remained liquid in its provisory transformation, awaiting the moment when the resurrection should restore it.

Thus, by a providential disposition of circumstances, in spite of all customs to the contrary, in spite, perhaps, of

[7] Two celebrated physicians, Grüner, *Comm. de J. C. Morte vera*, Halle, 1805, and William Stroud, *A Treatise on the Physical Cause of the Death of Christ*, London, 1847, have studied this question without arriving at any satisfactory solution.

[8] Thus St. John unconsciously furnished strong involuntary testimony to the truth of St. Luke's account of the bloody sweat. Here it is blood which is become partly water.

the criminal intentions of the Jews, who had demanded the mutilation of Jesus, the Messiah, the true Paschal Lamb, did not have His bones broken, and in Him, as St. John observes, the Mosaic prescription had been respected.[9] Moreover, the cut of the lance, which had taken the place of a disgraceful mutilation, completed the picture of the dying Messiah drawn by the prophets, and by this last sign the Jews should have recognised the Sacred Victim pierced by their criminal hands.[10]

The fulfilment of all these prophecies at the moment when Jesus was dying, and the very circumstances of His death produced a decisive impression not only on John, but also on other disciples whom fear had till then held at a distance from the sanguinary drama. They who had not dared to acclaim the Messiah or to surround Him publicly in the days of His power, were now seen to crowd about His inanimate corpse in the hour of His extreme humiliation. For we read that two of His proselytes, both members of the upper Jewish society, found energy enough to declare themselves when He had breathed His last. Such inconsistency is not rare in the history of mankind. One would say that, ashamed of their excessive pusillanimity and angry with themselves, these friends were eager to expiate their cowardice of yesterday by their courage of to-day.

[9] St. John alludes to *Exodus* xii, 46, and *Numbers* ix, 12. For him (*St. John* i, 29, and vi, 4) and for the primitive Church (*I Cor.* v, 7) the antitype of the Paschal lamb was Jesus Christ. (See *St. John* i, 29 and vi. 4.)

[10] The passage of Zacharias xii, 10, to which he alludes, represents Jehovah pierced by the blows of His people. St. John translates according to the Hebrew, and not according to the Septuagint. The latter, not understanding how God could be transfixed had softened the word by putting: "*They have insulted.*" The Evangelist takes from Zacharias' dramatic picture only the detail of the wound received by God, without stopping to consider the sentiments of repentance expressed in the looks and the groans of those who committed the crime. Moreover, his translation is free, as the text has it: "They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced."

One of them, therefore, bravely set out to find Pilate, and, as he had been a disciple of Jesus, although in secret, says St. John, he demanded His body [11] that he might give it honourable burial. This was Joseph of Arimathea,[12] a wealthy, just, and virtuous citizen, an honourable counsellor,[13] member of the Sanhedrim, who had taken no part in the guilty plottings of his colleagues. He believed in the coming of the Kingdom of God, having witnessed the providential fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies.

According to Jewish customs, the corpse of one who has been executed ought not to be entombed in a family vault. The Sanhedrim had assigned two places of burial, one for those who were decapitated, hanged, or crucified, and the other for those who were stoned or burnt. The Rabbis taught that the curse of God and legal impurity remained attached to the bones of criminals. Yet here we see a member of the great council claiming the honour of receiving, as a valued treasure and of himself entombing, the

[11] Meyer (*Matt.* xxvii, 58) justly remarks with what devoted sympathy the first Synoptic mentions, three times in a couple of lines, the Sacred remains of the Master, *τὸ σῶμα.*

[12] It is not known whether Arimathea, a city of Judæa, as St. Luke says (xxiii, 51), is Rama, mentioned in *Josue* xviii, 25, and which was of the tribe of Benjamin, or Ha-Ramathaïm, the home of Samuel, situated in the tribe of Ephraim (*I Kings*, i, 1), and which, formerly a city of the Samaritans, had become a Jewish city after the death of Alexander the Great. The latter hypothesis is the more probable, the name Ha-Ramathaïm bearing a closer resemblance to Arimathea than Rama. It is certain, though, that Joseph dwelt in Jerusalem, since he was a member of the great council and had a tomb in that city. It may be that, having only lately established himself in Jerusalem, he had had no occasion to use the family sepulchre which he had cut out.

[13] It has been justly said that each Evangelist has characterised Joseph according to the tastes of the readers for whom he wrote. In St. Matthew, who speaks to the Jews, he is a *rich man*, *πλούσιος*; in St. Mark, who speaks to the Romans, a *venerable senator*, *εὐσχήμων βουλευτής*; in St. Luke, who wrote for the Greeks, he was a *good and just counsellor*, *βουλευτὴς ὑπάρχων, ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ δίκαιος*. To the Greeks the ideal man was *καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός*.

crucified Nazarene. By the very terms of its legislation,[14] the Roman authority was not obliged to busy itself with the burying of those who were executed. Ordinarily and without further formality their corpses were given to the relatives who claimed them. Pilate at once summoned the centurion and asked him if Jesus was already dead;[15] the latter replying in the affirmative, the governor gave the body gratis[16] to him who sought it.

Joseph, therefore, provided with this formal authority, set about taking Jesus down from the cross in order to bury Him with every proof of the most respectful affection. Another Jew, hitherto as timid as he, although of lofty station, too, had come to give him assistance. It is possible that these two men, exercising the same judicial functions and having the same aspirations, lived on particularly intimate terms. In any case, the love of Jesus united them in the one act of courage and generosity. This newcomer at the foot of the Cross was Nicodemus, the same whom we have once seen talking at night with the Master in a conference replete with happy results, and whose words

[14] Ulpian. xlviii, 24, 1. *Dig.* L. I. D. *de cadav. punit.* says: "Corpora eorum qui capite damnantur cognatis ipsorum neganda non sunt; et id observasse etiam divus Augustus lib. x, de vita sua scribit." Quintilian (*Decl.* vi, 9) declares: "Sepeliri carnifex non vetat." If Sueton. (*Tib.*, 61) and Tacitus (*Ann.* vi, 19, 29) say that Tiberius disposed of them otherwise, this was because of special cases.

[15] This question on the part of Pilate, in St. Mark, is at first surprising, when we recollect the command which he gave, according to St. John, to put an end to those who had been crucified. But we can suppose that Pilate's messenger, bearing the command to break the legs of the executed men, had but just departed when Joseph presented himself with his request for the corpse. Pilate knew therefore, that his command was not yet fulfilled. To say that the breaking of their legs did not immediately kill the crucified men is not a worthy answer to this difficulty; for it is evident that criminals were not taken from the cross until they were dead, and their death was hastened only that they might be taken down.

[16] Pilate's liberality is emphasised here by St. Mark. Cicero tells us, in speaking of Verres, that the avidity of the governors sometimes exacted payment for the bodies of the crucified from the relatives who claimed them. *Verr.* ii, 45, and v, 45; Plutarch, *Galb.* xxviii.

of honesty and conviction we have heard in an effort to bring back the Sanhedrim to better sentiments with regard to Jesus.[17]

Joseph procured a shroud [18] of fine linen, and Nicodemus brought as his share a considerable quantity of aromatics, myrrh and aloes, a hundred pounds.[19] Following the example of Mary Magdalen, he meant to make this a last magnificent offering to Jesus.

Pious and loving hands [20] loosed the gentle Victim from His Cross. Carefully, lest they should be bruised the more, His feet and hands were freed from the nails that fastened them, and His body was immediately borne away to a neighbouring garden [21] where Joseph had caused a tomb to be cut out.[22] There, far from curious eyes, His funeral

[17] *St. John* vii, 50.

[18] This cerement, bought at that same hour, according to *St. Mark* xv, 46, proves that Jesus did not die on a Sabbath day. The Talmud explains that, if the Passover falls on the day following the Sabbath, it is permitted to make preparations for the Passover on the Sabbath, because the Passover takes precedence of the Sabbath. If it had been permitted to buy on the day of the Passover, because the next day was a Sabbath, it is the Sabbath that would have taken precedence of the Passover. Besides, can we admit that the most sacred day of the year, the fifteenth of Nisan, the solemnity of the Passover, was designated, like any ordinary Friday, παρασκευή, the preparation of the Sabbath.

[19] The dead were laid on a bed entirely covered with these aromatic spices. *II Parali.* xvi, 14. Hence the great quantity of them which in the present instance may seem to be exaggerated. At Herod's funeral five hundred servants were appointed to carry the perfumes intended for the embalming. *Antiq.* xvii, 8, 3.

[20] At this moment all the relatives and friends whom the Synoptics represent at a distance from the Cross, even after Jesus' death, could, no doubt, approach with impunity. Among them are mentioned Magdalen, Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, as well as the wife of Zebedee. Are we to believe that having, so to speak, furtively received her Son's last word, Mary had been taken away by John, from the scene where the awful drama was so sadly ending? The silence of the Evangelists justifies this supposition.

[21] *St. John* xix, 41.

[22] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 60, informs us concerning the proprietor of the garden and the tomb. The other Evangelists, while agreeing perfectly that the tomb had not yet been used, say nothing about the owner. In reading them one would think that the tomb had been selected because of its proximity or by

apparel might with tender solicitude be prepared. His body was covered with blood, they had to bathe it.[23] This last purification was a preparatory operation necessitated by the embalmment. Time pressed, hurriedly they covered the body with aromatics and swathed it in bandages according to the Jewish custom.[24] Then, not without kissing for the last time [25] the august brow of the Master, beautiful in all the majesty of death, they covered His head with a white cerement, which was also to enshroud the rest of the body. The precious remains were laid in the principal niche, or on the central stone bed, in the sepulchre, which was as yet hardly completed; for it seems that they closed it with a provisory door to protect [26] the dead, as was the custom, against the malice of enemies or the teeth of wild beasts. The last rays of the sun were withdrawing behind the mountains. With them the Master of life lay down in a tomb that had not known corruption, and upon a bed of perfumes of which He had no need to protect Himself against the inroads of death. During this time, each family having immolated its Paschal lamb in the Temple, was preparing to eat it, not knowing that the Victim on Calvary had just suppressed the utility of every other. Henceforth Jesus alone held the power of delivering from

chance, which would indeed be very surprising. These omissions do not argue well in favour of a written source.

[23] *Acts* ix, 37; Shabb. f. 151: "Ungunt et lavant mortuum."

[24] "The Egyptians," says Michaelis (*Begräbniss und Auferstehungsgesch.* xciii), "placed the aromatics inside of the corpse; but the Jews, who proceeded to the burial on the very day of the death, simply put the spices on the outside and over the whole body."

[25] *Gen.* xlvi, 4, and l, 1; Eusebius, *Mart. Pal.*, xi.

[26] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 60, καὶ προσκυλίσας λίθον μέγαν τῇ θύρᾳ, and *St. Mark* xv, 46, and xvi, 4, seem to indicate not the round stone or *golal* which usually covered the door of the tombs and was not large, but an enormous stone placed provisionally over the opening. However, the verb κυλίω invariably used in this connection, in its various forms, to indicate the rolling up or back of the stone, belongs particularly to the *golal* properly so-called.

death, because He alone was going to be the Prince of life.

Having rolled an enormous stone to cover the entrance of the sepulchre, the men withdrew. The devoted women still waited. They had considered the way in which Joseph and Nicodemus had arranged the body,[27] and their self-esteem seemed to tell them that they could and should do better, the second day after, when the feast should be over. To be ready the sooner, some of them—active souls have never been wanting in the Church—hastened to purchase other spices, more choice, in their opinion, than those used by Joseph and Nicodemus. The first hour of the feast obliged them to postpone until the next evening the continuance of their purchases. It became them, whatever it cost their hearts, severely to observe this last and solemn Sabbath of the ancient Covenant. Two of them, Magdalen and Mary, the mother of Joseph—meditative natures, lovers of contemplation are the honour of the Christian society—remained the last by the tomb. Heedless that it was for hate and not for friendship to guard the dead, the better to establish the reality of His resurrection they had seated themselves and, bent with grief, they contemplated the stone that concealed the precious remains, as if they still hoped to hear Him Who no longer spoke, or as if beyond the tomb they adored Him Whom the wicked had put to death. There was a touching picture of virtue under its twofold aspect in these two women of Galilee, who glorified Jesus Christ, the one shedding the tears of the converted sinner, the other those of the

[27] Were it not for the testimony of St. John, one would suppose that the body of Jesus was not embalmed. Not only do the three Synoptics make no mention of it, but St. Mark and St. Luke represent the holy women as coming the second next morning to prepare an embalming which was now useless since Jesus had risen. The explanation which we give of this seeming contradiction appears plausible.

woman always upright in her family life, and who were both together the symbol of faithful love and inexhaustible devotion.

The Gospel does not say how long these two friends continued thus to keep a guard of honour by the tomb. Night must have forced them to retire.

As to the enemies of the dead they were no calmer than His friends. Merciless and disturbing, the memory of their Victim pursued them, and the general impression of sadness that reigned over the city, after the events of the afternoon, only increased their vague fears. Whether it was that they themselves had sometimes heard Jesus announce His future resurrection, or that some one had told them of the hopes entertained by His disciples, timidly, no doubt, for their faith was feeble, but persistently, they still feared Him, Who, however, was dead.

On the other hand the people, struck, at first, by the sudden catastrophe, but again taking confidence, little by little, told each other, as they often do of great men, that Jesus was going to return. All this contributed not a little to increase the anxiety of the chief priests.

The very morning of the Feast of the Passover, they came together [28] to communicate their impressions, and some of them betook themselves to Pilate: "Sir," they said to him, "we have remembered that that seducer said, while he was yet alive: After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day; lest perhaps His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people: He is risen from the dead, and the last error shall be worse than the first." If therefore any one should perchance tell them that Jesus is

[28] There is nothing to authorise us in saying that the Sanhedrim had been assembled with solemnity, or that they went in a body to Pilate. It is enough that some of the most influential managed the affair. They spoke in the name of all.

risen again, the leaders of the people have their answer ready.

Wearied by their demands, Pilate with some humour replied: "You have a guard;[29] go, guard it as you know." Thus he mocked their vain fears. They had a whole cohort; this ought to be deemed enough to defend them against one dead man. Never had criminal given so much worry after his execution. Above all never had crucified man had the honour of being guarded by a squad of soldiers.[30]

They departed, therefore, and, having without doubt ascertained that the body was still in the sepulchre, they sealed the stone over the opening, in accordance with the Oriental custom, with the aid of a cord fastened in the rock and each end of which received the impress of a seal.[31]

[29] Some think that Pilate here means ministers of the Temple whom the chief priests had in their service, and whom they might employ with advantage in guarding a tomb. It would be easier to explain the corruption of the latter than that of Roman soldiers in inducing them to declare that they had slept when they should have kept watch. Nevertheless, the word κουστωδία, borrowed from the Latin, would seem to indicate a *Roman* guard, and the mention of the captain, τοῦ ἡγεμόνος (*St. Matt.* xxviii, 14) ought to make this opinion prevail.

[30] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 62–66, alone reports this important fact. He alone later on (xxviii, 4, and 11–15) points out its consequences. Nowhere else either in the other Gospels or in the preaching of the Apostles is any allusion made to it; certain indications even are discovered which are far from suggesting it. Thus it seems, according to them, that the women on their way to embalm Jesus know nothing of the tomb being sealed or of the soldiers having been appointed to guard it, since they ask not whether they shall be allowed to enter the tomb, but who shall open the door for them. These important omissions give rise to the belief that there may be others no less important throughout the Gospel narrative.

[31] The spot now venerated by the piety of the faithful is in reality the spot on which the Holy Sepulchre stood.

The best proof, in our opinion, reduces itself to a historical argument which the topographical discoveries up to the present day have failed to overturn.

There is no doubt that at the beginning the Apostles and the first Christians knew exactly the precise spot where Jesus had been buried and had risen again. The Evangelists, who speak of it thirty and fifty years after Jesus Christ, furnish a proof of this. Thus St. John says that there was a garden there, and all declare that it was at the place called Golgotha. However

Then only did they believe themselves masters of their victim; and having thus entombed and sealed up in the sepulchre the last Messianic hopes of the nation they proceeded to solemnise the great day of the Passover. With confident satisfaction they left to soldiers the care of defending Judaism against the undertakings of a dead man or the daring of a few followers so absorbed in their mourning, that they seem to have been heedless, until the last

complete may have been the destruction of the city under Titus (70 A.D.), it cannot be said to have gone so far as to affect a tomb cut in a cliff. Hence, at their return from Pella, where they had taken refuge, the first Christians were able to find again in Jerusalem the tomb which they had honoured before the siege. Their veneration continued until the second destruction of the city under Hadrian (136 A.D.). This catastrophe was less terrible than the first. Jerusalem, only partially destroyed, was soon afterwards rebuilt under the name of Ælia Capitolina. The succession of twenty-three bishops who, according to the list preserved by Eusebius (*H. E.*, iv, 6. Cf. Le Quien, *Oriens Christ.*, iii, p. 145), occupied the see of Jerusalem down to the time of Constantine, proves the full vitality of the church of Jerusalem. This were enough to prove that the tradition could not be lost, and that, during this period of 190 years the veneration of the tomb of the Saviour must have continued. But, if we may believe the same historian (*Vita Constantini* iii, 25, 40), there was side by side with the testimony of the faithful the no less decisive testimony of enemies.

Eusebius (*Vita Constantini* iii, 26) relates that "certain wicked men, veritable agents of the demons, wishing to cause the disappearance of the tomb, the object of the veneration of the faithful, covered the cave ἄντρον, which was cut in the rock, with earth which was procured only with difficulty. When they had thus buried it, they paved the carefully piled up soil, and built a temple consecrated to the impure Venus." Unfortunately Eusebius does not mention the names of those who committed this sacrilege, nor the precise date when it was committed. St. Jerome (*Ep.* lviii, *ad Paulin.*, 3) later on mentions the presence of a statue of Venus in the place where the Holy Sepulchre was, and assigns this odious profanation to the time of Hadrian. We have also a medal of Antoninus Pius with a Venus standing in a temple and the inscription C. A. C. or *Colonia Ælia Capitolina*. This testimony is not without its value.

In any case it was the altar consecrated to Venus that indicated to Constantine the place where to look for the tomb of Our Lord. One may read in the life of this emperor (Eusebius, *Vit. Const.*, in the passage already cited) the history of the discovery of this precious relic, the joy of the prince and the description of the magnificent edifice which was constructed on the spot thus happily found. Eusebius had been present in 335 at its consecration. But—and this remark has its own importance—the indication of the site of the Holy Sepulchre in the spot where it is, gave rise to serious difficulties. The moderns were not the first to point them out. In the fourth century, as

moment, of the presence of a guard around the tomb.[32] In their madness, they knew not that the sun's rays cannot be imprisoned, and that at the appointed hour, in spite of all, life breaks forth and sheds its light. God cannot be bound by the hand of man, and this guard will serve not to prevent, but to prove the resurrection.[33]

well as in our day, it was known that Jesus, according to the Gospel, had been crucified and buried *outside* of the city (*St. John* xix, 20; *Hebr.* xiii, 12) and at that epoch, as now, the site of the Holy Sepulchre was visibly *inside*. There is no doubt that if, for the want of positive information, it had been necessary at that time to invent or to create a site, naturally it would have been preferable to locate it on the north side of the city. There probably was the traditional place for capital executions. St. Stephen had been stoned in that locality, and the conformation of the ground has recently permitted General Gordon to reconstruct an imaginary Calvary to which this explorer has attached his name. If this was not taken seriously, and if the present site has been accepted, although apparently improbable, it is because it was sustained by the most legitimate tradition.

Besides, as we have said, not one single archæological discovery has been able seriously to contradict the authority of this tradition. Not only has it not been proved—which, we grant, would have been decisive—that the second wall of Jerusalem enclosed in the city of Herod the present Holy Sepulchre, but all the fragments of ramparts brought to light at different points, to the south, to the southeast, and to the east of the Holy Sepulchre, indicate that this second wall, starting according to Josephus (*B. J.*, v, 4, 1, 2) at the Gate of Gennath, and ending at the Tower Antonia, thus forming a sort of arc of a circle, even so left Calvary outside of the city. Finally, we know the severity with which the Jews kept the dead far from the inhabited centres. "No tombs within the enclosure of the city, except that of David and that of Hulda," says the Talmud (*Baba Bathra*, ii, 9; cf. Yoma iii, 3). "They must be fifty cubits from the ramparts." But twenty or more yards from the present Holy Sepulchre are to be found tombs cut in the rock. See the description of them by M. Clermont-Ganneau (*Explor. Fund.*, 1877, p. 76, *et seq.*). These *kokim* certainly date back to the Jewish epoch. One may seek there for souvenirs of whom he will, from David and Solomon to Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, the fact alone of their presence proves that at an epoch previous to the construction of the third wall, called Agrippa's, the site of Calvary and of the present Holy Sepulchre was outside of the city.

[32] The pious women, on their way to the sepulchre, wonder who will remove the stone for them, as if they were absolutely free to remove it and to embalm the corpse.

[33] From the earliest times, it has been believed that Pontius Pilate sent to Tiberius an official report of the trial and execution of Jesus. St. Justin Martyr, in his *First Apology* to Antoninus Pius, appeals to this document to prove the reality of the miracles, and of the sanctity of Jesus, § 35: "Ἐκ τῶν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου γενομένων αὐτῷ μαθεῖν δύνασθε." Tertullian, in chapter xxi, of his *Apology* does the same. "Ea omnia super Christo

While they were thus agitated, without respect for their last Sabbath, Jesus was inaugurating, by His rest in the sepulchre, the eternal Sabbath.

As the Father had rested after the six days of the Creation, so the Son rested after the labours of the Redemption. He, too, had accomplished His work. He could repose on the evening of His long day, in everlasting glory.

The Scriptures [34] tell us, however, and the Catholic creed repeats it, that, even in death, Jesus did not remain inactive. Not only were the present and the future to be summoned to salvation. All the just of antiquity were to receive the Good Tidings. While the body of the Saviour lay at rest in the sepulchre, His soul united to His Divinity went down into Limbo, or Scheol, to evangelise the dead. At the sight of Him, the virtuous men of all times and all lands, who had longed for the Deliverer, trembled with joy. The brazen gates of the dwelling beneath the earth were burst, as the prophet says, and death met her conqueror. We know only one thing concerning this world of spirits: that is that it exists. In what condi-

Pilatus, et ipse, jam pro sua conscientia Christianus Cæsari tunc Tiberio nuntiavit." Eusebius (*H. E.*, ii, 2) assures us, on the authority of Tertullian that Tiberius, on reading Pilate's account of the death, the resurrection, and the miracles of Jesus, proposed to the Senate to place the latter on the same rank with the gods. A homily attributed to St. Chrysostom (*Hom.* viii, *in Pasch.*) alludes to these documents of Pilate as being commonly spread and read in the Church. In reality, it is possible that the governor, according to the custom, made a report to the emperor concerning what had been done with regard to Jesus. Philo mentions periodical reports made to Caligula by the governor of Alexandria, and the administration of the empire was sufficiently well organized for us to believe that it was the same everywhere. But Pilate's true report was so falsified and at so early a date (Eusebius, *H. E.*, ix, 5, 1, points out that this falsification occurred under Domitian and was spread in the schools of the city in order to destroy the faith), that the counterfeits compromised the authority and the existence of the original. The *Acta Pilati* which we read to-day are certainly apocryphal. (See Tischendorf, *Pilati circ. Christ. jud. quid lucis afferatur ex Actis Pilati*, 1855; Lipsius, *Die Pilatus Akten*, 1871; Harnack, *Die Chronol. d. Altchrist. Litt.* i, 603, *et seq.*)

[34] *Ephes.* iv, 8-10; *I Peter* iii, 19; iv, 6.

tion did the immortal life of these souls, the chosen ones of the humanity of old, flow on? We cannot say.[35] Nevertheless, it is easy to understand that all these prophets, patriarchs, philosophers, just men of all ages and all

[35] We know that at a very early date, perhaps at the close of the second century, an apocryphal author, probably reporting a popular legend, wrote the history of the *Descent of Jesus Christ into Scheol.* This book of eleven chapters was afterwards joined to the sixteen chapters of the *Acta Pilati*, and forms with them the *Gospel of Nicodemus.* See Tischendorf, *Ev. Apocrypha*, pp. 368-410. According to this story, two sons of the High-Priest Simeon, Karinus and Leucius, who rose from the dead at the same time as Jesus, by the same almighty power, write for Annas, Caiphas, and other Jews who went to Arimathea to question them, on account of the work of Jesus among the dead. The scene they picture is very dramatic. According to them, at the moment when the dead were expressing, in the presence of the aged Simeon, John the Baptist, and the patriarch Seth, who were encouraging them, their hopes of the coming visit of the Deliverer, and while, on the other hand, Satan and Hades were exchanging their malevolent views concerning Jesus, a voice like thunder cried out: "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O ye eternal gates; and the King of glory shall enter in!" In vain did the infernal powers resist; the army of the just, with David and Isaias began to chant that from the beginning the victory of the Lord had been foretold, and the latter, in fact, entering in all His Majesty, had vanquished the demons and death. He conducted into light and glory, with Adam at their head, all those who bore His own image and likeness, declaring that they who had perished by the tree were saved by the tree. The good thief even had taken his place among those whom Jesus with the sign of the Cross, had delivered from prison and brought into paradise.

These fanciful accounts contain nothing in common with the constant and positive tradition of the Church concerning the work of Jesus in the resting-place of the dead. From Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.*, 4, 72; Irenæus, *Hæres.* iv, 39, and 45; v, 31; Clement of Alex., *Strom.* vi; Origen, *C. Cels.* ii, down to Epiphan., *Hæres.* 62 and 69; Chrysostom, *Hom.* lxxxi, *de nom. Cœmeter. et de Cruce*; Cyril of Alex., *in Joan.* xii, for the Greeks; and from Tertullian, *de Anima*, iv; Hilary, *de Trin.* x, down to Ambrose, *de Incarn.* v; *de Fide*, iii, 3; Augustine, *Epist.* cxi, *ad Evod., de Genes. ad litt.* xxxiii, *Epist.* lvii, *ad Dardanum*, and Jerome, *Epist.* cli, *ad Algasium*, and *in Ephes.* iv, 10, etc., for the Latins, all the Fathers agree in saying that Christ descended into Scheol to bring to the dead the benefits of His Redemption. Some, like St. Ambrose, or rather the false Ambrose in the book *de Paschate*, give a wide extent to the effects of this Redemption. Clement of Alex. (*Strom.*, ch. v and vi) and Origen (*C. Cels.* ii), together with several others, assure us that the philosophers of antiquity had a share in this deliverance. We readily admit with St. John Damascene or the author of the book Περὶ τῶν ἐν πίστει κεκοιμημένων, that Jesus delivered the believers of the Old Testament because He owed this to their fidelity, and the virtuous souls among the Gentiles, because He knew their good-will.

countries, forming a society happy, to be sure, but still with many desires and needs, possessing life without full light, let forth a cry of enthusiasm when they beheld approaching, into the abode of death, the Hope, the King, the Saviour of Mankind. "He preached to the dead," says St. Peter, and they who had foreseen, felt and foretold the Gospel, welcomed it with great joy. Their exile was ended, their sorrows consoled, their happiness regained. Grouped around their Messiah, they received His teachings, while awaiting the hour when this Messiah, the first risen from the dead, should open the gates of heaven to captivity which had become His glorious and triumphant captive.

CHAPTER III

THE ENEMIES OF JESUS

Israel's Crucifixion—Annas Smitten in his Descendants—Caiphas Deposed—The Exile of Herod—Pilate's Despair—The Remorse of Judas. (St. Matthew xxvii, 3–10; Acts 1, 18–19.)

It is natural to wonder what vengeance God exacts for the crimes He suffers to be committed. The conscience of mankind feels a sense of relief when it sees equity restored by the punishment of the guilty.

The true culprit, in the crime we have just recounted, was Israel as a whole. When, forty years later, on the same day, God permitted the soldiers of Titus to enter the Holy City and to burn the Temple, which was never to be rebuilt, it was nothing more than justice. Around the fortifications, and on the spot where they had crucified Jesus, these same Jews were seen crucified in their turn by the Romans. The fury of the conquerors was such that they suspended their barbarous executions only for the want of trees from which to fashion crosses and of space where to plant them.[1] It might have been said, recollecting that long before they had been compelled to crucify a just man on that spot, they sought now to obliterate that crime by the immolation of thousands of the guilty. They fastened them in twos to the same gibbet. The remainder

[1] Josephus, *B. J.*, v, ii, 1.

of the inhabitants were put to the sword. History has preserved the memory of no catastrophe comparable to this.

At the head of this nation were men who had consented to personify its malice and to bring about its triumph: Annas, Caiphas, Herod, Pilate, and above all Judas. History recounts in part the woes that befell them all.

Had he lived long enough, Annas would have seen one of his sons, who bore almost the same name as he, and had surpassed his brothers in rapine [2] and barbarity,[3] put to death by rioters. By a strange coincidence, the popular revolt had given him, as companion in torture, another high-priest named Jesus. The Idumæans trampled their corpses beneath their feet, and left them unburied to become the food of dogs.[4]

Caiphas was deposed from office in the year 36 by Vitellius, legate of Syria, the people having demanded his dismissal.[5]

Herod, impelled by the ever-growing ambition of his wife, went in person to Rome to meet his fate. He sought the title of King, and Caligula gave him perpetual exile.[6] It was in Gaul, at Lyons, or in a small town at the foot of the Pyrenees, that he ended his life in misery.[7]

Pilate, who had sacrificed Jesus to prevent an uprising in Jerusalem, was soon after obliged to go at the head of

[2] The Talmud has stigmatised the whole house of Annas which had become rich by trafficking in holy things: "Woe to the house of Annas!" it says (*Pes.* 57a). "Woe to its serpent's hissing!"

[3] *Antiq.* xx, 9, 2–4.

[4] Josephus, *B. J.*, iv, 5, 2.

[5] *Antiq.* xviii, 4, 3. *Fasti sacri*, Nos. 1495 and 1496.

[6] *B. J.*, iv, 5, 2.

[7] It is said, in fact (*Antiq.* xviii, 7, 3), that Lugdunum was his place of banishment; but as Josephus (*B. J.*, ii, 9, 6) represents him as having died in Spain, many have thought that it must be Lugdunum Convenarum, Saint-Bertrand de Comminges, and not Lyons.

his soldiers to suppress a more serious revolt in Samaria. In that country there was another Messiah, a false one, surrounded by armed and turbulent followers. There was no likeness between this man and the august prisoner who by His majesty and silence had astonished Pilate in the prætorium. There was a conflict and the procurator was ferocious in his triumph.[8] The Samaritans brought their complaints before Vitellius who was at that time governor of Syria. Pilate was summoned to Rome to defend himself. He who had sacrificed Jesus through fear of losing Cæsar's favour, discovered then that, to be proof against disappointment, it is safer to continue the incorruptible friend of truth and justice. Tiberius had just died, and Caligula had replaced him (36 A.D.) The procurator was severely condemned and exiled to Vienne in Gaul. In that city, where an old tradition says he died, there is still shown the lofty pyramid which was his tomb.

According to one of the popular legends—there are many concerning the wretched procurator—he betook himself to Switzerland to bury his remorse, near the Lake of Lucerne, on the mountain that bears his name. There, filled with regret and weighed down with misery, he ended his life by hurling himself into the dark chasm that yawns on the summit of the awful mount. From time to time the shepherds in the valley think they again perceive his shade issuing from the abyss in the attitude of a man washing his hands. When it returns to its place, there rises above the infernal lake a black mist always laden with tempests and misfortunes. These tales are nothing more than the expression, more or less ingenuous, of the indignation aroused in the hearts of honest men by the criminal weak-

[8] *Antiq.* xviii, 4, 1, *et seq.*

ness of the sinful governor.[9] If glory is a reward of virtue, infamy is the punishment of crime. The Church could find nothing severer for the iniquitous judge than to brand his name in the Creed. She has done this, and so has given him up for ever to the execration of nations.[10]

But the one who above them all had by his foul betrayal become more particularly odious to the followers of the Master was Judas. He merited a punishment more severe and more speedy than the rest. The Evangelists have taken pains to tell us of his woful lot. The primitive Church could not but be interested in it. Nothing could be more terrible than the close of this life, invited as it was to glory in the apostolate and ending so miserably in despair and suicide.

Hardly had the wretch betrayed his Master when he felt his heart tormented by the most cutting remorse. The memory of the gentle and august Victim never left him after. For a few hours, it may be, he still retained the hope of seeing Jesus, stronger than His enemies, render his betrayal vain and escape its final consequences. But on Friday morning he saw that all was lost. The sentence of the Sanhedrim and the official procedure before Pilate left no further doubt concerning the result. He had sold

[9] Eusebius (*H. E.*, ii, 7) says that he committed suicide under Caligula, "ποικιλαῖς περὶ πεσὼν συμβοραῖς." Orosius (vi, 5) and Freculph. (*Chron.* ii, 1, 12) say he died in Gaul. The legend of Mount Pilatus near Lucerne dates only from the eleventh century. G. A. Müller (*Pontius Pilatus*, Stuttgart, 1888) has gathered all the apocryphal literature produced concerning this unfortunate personage whom some represent as dying in despair, others as a penitent, or even, like the Coptic Church, as a martyr for the faith.

[10] Modern criticism believes it has discovered in the first and the third Synoptic a tendency to lessen somewhat the Roman procurator's responsibility in the condemnation of Jesus Christ. This tendency, more emphatic in St. John, has its full development, it is thought, in the fragment of the Gospel said to be St. Peter's, recently discovered in Egypt. It is explained we are told, by the desire, which was quite natural for Christians to have, to cater to the Roman authority, by associating it as little as possible in the awful deicide. This view is entirely baseless.

his Master to murderers; by his betrayal of Him he had slain Him.

It was then that his sorrow became still more bitter.[11] The responsibility he had incurred crushed him down. He conceived the thought of freeing himself of it in time, and of casting it off, at the last moment, upon those who had encouraged him in his crime. This was not true contrition.[12] In the depths of his soul there was more pride than repentance. Even though angered at his own cowardice, he had by no means turned towards God with any sentiment of humility or love. His heart repeated to him, perhaps, the Master's tender words at the moment of the fatal kiss, but they were like the hammer that breaks the marble but does not soften it. Meanwhile, to have sacrificed so noble and so beautiful a life, a just man, a friend, the best of Masters, for thirty pieces of silver, seemed to him the most inconceivable folly. The money scorched his hands as they shrivelled with despair. He resolved not to keep it, and, hurrying to the Temple, he sought there his accomplices in the horrible bargain. The traitor was mistaken. It was not to them that he should have run, it was to Jesus. The latter alone could calm his remorse by blessing his good purpose. "I have sinned," he told them in the violence of his despair, "in betraying innocent blood." An avowal so clear and so explicit in the mouth of a man who, to palliate his own crime, should have desired to find Jesus guilty, annulled the false accusations of the Sanhedrim. In his agitation, Judas, forgetful of everything, went so far as to hurl the price of blood in the face, so to speak, of his corrupters, and the money,

[11] *St. Matt.* xxvii, 3, indicates that it was at the very moment, τότε, when he saw Jesus given into the hands of Pilate that the traitor underwent this moral crisis.

[12] The Evangelist's expression, μεταμεληθείς, means regret, it is true, but a thoroughly human regret which, St. Paul says (*II Cor.* vii, 10) worketh death.

falling upon the very pavement of the Temple,[13] aroused for a moment the susceptibilities of these aged hypocritical casuists. They simply had it gathered up, and to the wicked disciple whom they had so eagerly welcomed the first time, they gave this discouraging answer: "What is that to us? Look thou to it." The wretched man departed, the price of blood, given back to his destroyers, having in no way lightened the burden that weighed down his heart. The haughty response of the Sanhedrists, giving him up to remorse of conscience, only irritated his woe, and prepared him for a supreme act of despair. Grace would have moved him to hasten and have himself nailed to a cross to die like the thief, under the eye and in the mercy of the Master. Satan persuaded him to hurry off and hang himself, rejecting all forgiveness, and sealing his crimes in final despair.

After due deliberation, the members of the great council decided that the price of blood could not be placed in the sacred treasure without defiling it.[14] Their hypocritical zeal found another use for it. With this small sum they bought a potter's field in the valley of Hinnon, south of Jerusalem, with the intention of devoting it to the burial of those strangers, Jews or Proselytes, who should happen to die in the Holy City. Thus a pious use was found for the money that was stained with the blood of the Just One. This was one reason for calling that place Haceldama, the *Field of Blood*.[15]

[13] The expression ἐν τῷ ναῷ seems to indicate the very temple where the priests fulfilled their functions, and not the dependencies, which surrounded it. These latter constituted the ἱερόν, in opposition to the ναός.

[14] The law forbade money accruing from any disgraceful action to be put into the sacred treasury (*Deut.* xxiii, 18). This sacred treasury which Josephus (*B. J.*, ii, 9, 4), as well as the Gospel, calls *Corban*, was the series of chests located in the women's enclosure to receive the offerings given for the support of the Temple.

[15] Heqal-Dema, nowadays Hakk-ed-Dumm, in the time of the Crusades the charnel-house of Chaudemar, is situated south of Jerusalem. Eusebius

Almost immediately another reason was provided. A prey to anguish every moment more bitter, Judas, after a few days of suffering,[16] carried out his woful project in that very cemetery which was bought with the fruit of his iniquity. In that abominable place, which was to recall his crime to future generations, he hanged himself, and thus, according to St. Peter's awful words, he, the first of all, took possession of that cursed land to enjoy it until the end of time.

Whether it was that the tree or the rope broke beneath the weight of the wretch whom they bore, or that the rope simply was cut by passers-by, it matters not. The body fell and burst asunder, and, the traitor's entrails gushing forth in all directions, it was true to say, once again, that this field was really the field of blood, bought by the blood of the Just One and drenched with that of the criminal.[17]

by a curious inadvertence located it north, *ἐν βορείοις;* but St. Jerome corrects this, saying: "Acheldama, ager sanguinis qui hodieque monstratur in Ælia, ad australem plagam montis Sion." Tradition—which is positive concerning this sadly celebrated spot, devoted to a very special purpose—has always pointed it out half-way up the hill, on a height to the south parallel with the valley of Hinnon. To be buried in this *potter's field*, bought by the price of the blood of Jesus Christ, became the privilege of lords and of religious. In the fourteenth century the Dominicans acquired it, and established there a convent and a church, but they could not withstand the depredations of the Mussulmans. The charnel-house alone, a vast rectangle backed by the mountain, remains partly standing. Even now the ruins are visited. Many mortuary niches were cut in the cliff. The Pisans, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, transported enormous quantities of the soil of Haceldama in order to establish their famous *Campo Santo*, just as St. Helen, the mother of Constantine, according to a pious belief, had done when she desired to establish the cemetery of the Vatican.

[16] St. Peter's discourse proves that at Pentecost Judas was dead.

[17] In this way, it seems, we may harmonise two accounts which at first glance are quite divergent. For, according to *St. Matt.* xxvii, 5, Judas dies by hanging, *καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγξατο.* According to St. Peter, *Acts* i, 18, he falls headlong *πρηνὴς γενόμενος* and his entrails protrude in his fall. According to St. Matthew, it is the priests that purchase the potter's field; according to St. Peter, it is Judas that would seem to have bought it. Finally, the account of the former supposes that the name Haceldama arose from the blood of Jesus in connection with the money with

This fatal field was located in the gloomy valley of the sons of Hinnon. Tradition has fixed its site. Such terrible memories had remained particularly indelible in the primitive Church. Every one held this spot in horror, and, in the Psalmist's words quoted by St. Peter, the traitor's refuge remained solitary and desolate. The

which the field had been bought; the story of the latter supposes that it took its name from the blood of Judas with which it was soaked.

Attempts have been made in turn to modify the meaning both of ἀπήγξατο, which has been accepted as meaning not hanging, but the moral anguish that had stifled the traitor, and of πρηνὴς γενόμενος, which has been translated *being hanged.* But both the one and the other of these attempts have done violence to the text as well as to the universal tradition, and contained, besides, serious difficulties for the two other divergencies. Our explanation, justly supposing that Judas lived for some days after the betrayal, gives time for the field to be bought first by the priests. The events of the Passion, perhaps, even the reports of the Resurrection, only intensify the traitor's remorse. This field, which preserves the memory of his crime and which is truly his, since he bought it with money most dearly earned, troubles his soul still more. He selects it as the spot on which to do himself solemn justice. By dying there so tragically, he provides tradition with another reason for calling it Haceldama, the *Field of Blood.*

Besides, we must not forget that, in St. Matthew, we have a narrative which must be accepted literally, and in the Acts a discourse in which we must take account of oratorical form. Still, we must agree that, even after this explanation, it is quite surprising that St. Matthew, on the one hand, reproduces only the first phase of the drama, and the discourse of St. Peter, on the other, only the second part. A very old tradition—it has been preserved by Papias in the fourth book of his account of Our Lord's Discourses —would unite more directly with the book of the *Acts*, which it supposes to be known. We find it in the *Catena ad Act. Apostolorum*, i, 18, of Theophylact, and in Routh, *Reliquiæ Sacræ*, Vol. I, p. 25. As a terrible example of the punishment of impiety here below, the body of the traitor swelled to such an extraordinary degree that it could not even pass through an opening of the size of a chariot. It hardly supported his head, which had become of monstrous proportions. His whole body, in a word, had assumed a most hideous appearance. Water and worms issued from every part. After the most cruel moral and physical torments, he died on his own land, ἐν ἰδίῳ χωρίῳ, a land accursed and abandoned which no one could pass without covering the nostrils so detestable was the odour from it.

Later Œcumenius, in a commentary on *Acts* i, 18, with what foundation is not known, says that Judas was thrown to the ground (this is the πρηνὴς γενόμενος of the *Acts*) by a chariot which passing over his body cut it in two and crushed out his entrails. We can see how far all this is from the sage sobriety of the sacred text, and how quickly a popular legend springs into existence.

money paid him for his crime was of no greater profit to him than to give him as a resting-place a most dishonoured grave.[18]

[18] St. Matthew, in keeping with his custom of pointing out the prophecies fulfilled in the Gospel history, observes that the buying of the *potter's field* accomplished what was written in the prophet Jeremias. This observation has given rise to many difficulties.

It is generally believed that there is a mistake in the name of the prophet, a very old error since it appears in all the manuscripts. Some unlearned copyist may have introduced Jeremias where he should have read Zacharias in abbreviated form. Several, together with St. Augustine (*de Cons. Evang.* iii, 8), admit that the Evangelist may have been distracted and wrote Jeremias instead of Zacharias. As a matter of fact, Zacharias xi, 13, presents us the Saviour renouncing His functions as shepherd of the flock that is consigned to death. This flock is the unfortunate nation of the Jews. On resigning His charge, because of the obstinate incredulity of His people, He demands His wages, and they give him thirty pieces of silver. He, dissatisfied with so mean a salary, casts it disdainfully into the Temple. It is gathered up as something defiled, and taken away to the *potter's field*, where it remains as a pledge of divine vengeance until the day of judgment reserved for the nation. If we consider not the form, but the substance of this prophecy, we may in some measure make it agree with what is said in St. Matthew: the Shepherd who is disgusted with the wicked flock and who, on resigning his charge, demands his salary, is Jesus. Israel, through the Sanhedrim, estimates at thirty pieces of silver the labours of the Divine Shepherd. God, by the regret which He rouses in Judas' soul, brings back to the Sanhedrim the contemptible sum at which they had valued the life of the Shepherd, and this money gathered up in the Temple where it was thrown, is used to purchase the *potter's field*, to perpetuate the memory of this detestable crime. However, dissatisfied with this laboured interpretation, other interpreters have thought that St. Matthew alluded to one of the lost fragments of Jeremias. St. Jerome says that he read this passage in a manuscript belonging to a Nazarean, but he denies its authenticity. Eusebius (*Dem. Ev.* x, 4) supposed that the Jews had at an early date suppressed this prophecy in the book of Jeremias.

BOOK II

Life

CHAPTER I

THE MORNING OF THE THIRD DAY

THE TWILIGHT PILGRIMAGE TO THE SEPULCHRE—THE RESURRECTION—MAGDALEN HASTENS TO TELL PETER AND JOHN—THE OTHER WOMEN AND THE ANGELS—PETER AND JOHN—MAGDALEN—THE FIRST APPARITION OF JESUS—NOLI ME TANGERE—HIS APPARITION TO THE OTHER WOMEN—WHY JESUS DOES NOT SHOW HIMSELF TO THE WHOLE CITY—THE REPORT SPREAD BY THE SOLDIERS. (St. John xx, 1–18; St. Luke xxiv, 1–12; St. Mark xvi, 1–11; St. Matthew xxviii, 1–15.)[1]

THE friends of Jesus spent the first day of the festival in sadness and dejection. These sentiments in the women, who were, perhaps, more faithful and more demonstrative in their attachment, were mingled with a lively

[1] At first sight, a comparison of the four Gospel accounts is somewhat disconcerting. Thus, according to St. Matthew, at dawn on the day following the Sabbath, Mary Magdalen and the other Mary go to visit the tomb. An event which seems to have taken place before their eyes, but which can also be supposed to be anterior to their coming if we take the aorists ἐγένετο, ἀπεκύλισεν, etc., as pluperfects, has overturned everything in the neighbourhood of the sepulchre. An angel brilliant with light had rolled back the stone, and the soldiers on guard were as if dead. Seated upon the stone, the heavenly messenger announces to them, while inviting them to see for themselves, that the Crucified One is no longer in the tomb. He bids them go and bring the news to the disciples, adding that the Lord

impatience. To pay to the beloved Master their last homage, to renew the embalming, to see Him and to touch Him for the last time, seemed to them a supreme and most desirable consolation.

is gone before them into Galilee, and that there they shall see Him. But while they in a transport of joy are hastening off to notify the Apostles, Jesus appears to them, receives their adoration, and reiterates the command of the angel. They fulfil their mission, in fact, and the disciples hurry into Galilee to the mountain indicated by Jesus; it is there that they see the Master, and receive His last instructions. Thus ends the first Gospel.

In St. Mark, Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of James and Salome go to the sepulchre early in the morning to embalm the body of Jesus, and while they are wondering who will remove for them the enormous stone that closed the entrance, they perceive that the stone has been removed. They enter the tomb and, to their dismay, they find there, seated on the right, a young man clad in white, who speaks to them the same words as the angel *seated outside*, in St. Matthew. They rush out in a fright, and hasten away without a word to any one, fear having sealed their lips. The Evangelist's account, properly so-called, stops here. The end of the chapter is a *résumé* of the different apparitions and has an importance quite apart, for if it is not from St. Mark's own pen, which has by no means been proved, as we shall say farther on, it must have been the work of some apostolic personage of authority. Otherwise it would never have been accepted as an integral part of the Gospel by the primitive Church. This fragment sanctions the accounts given in the third Synoptic and in St. John.

St. Luke shows us the devoted women (ch. xxiii, 55), that is, Mary Magdalen, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James and others with them (xxiv, 10), going to the tomb for the embalming. As in St. Mark, they find the stone removed, the body of Jesus gone, and *two* men in shining apparel who bear witness to the resurrection of the Crucified, in conformity with the predictions which He had made while living. They depart to announce this to the Eleven and to the others, who, for the most part, treat their account as an "idle tale." Here, no more than in St. Mark, is it said that they saw the Lord. Peter, however, runs to the tomb and returns astonished at having found it empty. In the evening Jesus appears to the disciples at Emmaus, to Peter and to the Apostles. This Gospel closes with a short account of the Ascension.

Finally, St. John represents Mary Magdalen as on her way to the tomb while it is yet dark. Seeing that the stone no longer closed the entrance, this pious disciple of Jesus supposes that the corpse has been stolen, and hurries to inform Peter and John. These latter hasten to the tomb, and finding there only the shroud and the linen cloths, return home. Magdalen, weeping before the tomb, leans forward to look into the interior, and perceives two angels clothed in white, one at the head the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been laid. While they ask her the cause of her despair, and while she is replying, another behind her asks her the same question. This is Jesus Who makes Himself known and bids her announce to His brethren that He is ascending to His Father and His God. Mary Magdalen hastens to tell the disciples that she has seen the

So, having provided themselves with aromatic spices on Saturday evening, at the close of the Sabbath, they were eager on Sunday morning to forestall the day and to has-

Master and that He has spoken to her. In the evening Jesus appears to the Apostles. Eight days later, in order to convince Thomas, He appears to them again, this time in Jerusalem also. The fourth Gospel ends with the appendix, ch. xxi, in which is related the apparition on the shore of the Lake of Genesareth.

If, at the close of our study of the Gospels, another and final proof were needed of the independence of their authors one from the other, it would be found in this simple statement of their accounts of the history of the Resurrection. Whether each one desired to bring his biography to a close with a picture the best suited to place emphasis on the dominant idea of his redaction, or whether their conclusion comes somewhat by chance, as many other events do, beneath their pen, there is no doubt that they follow different lines and with great freedom. And yet these narratives are most plainly unanimous in placing before our eyes the fact that on the day following the Sabbath, the first day of the week, the Apostles were convinced that Jesus, Who had been buried two days previously, had risen again from the dead. And this conviction, as far as they are concerned, will henceforth admit of no hesitation, even for Thomas, who is finally convinced. This fact in itself would be decisive in establishing the authority of the testimony which they have borne to the most conclusive of miracles, even though exegetes should fail to dispose of the objections raised by critics. But exegesis has never despaired of establishing a general harmony between these accounts. As complex and at first glance as embarrassing as these difficulties may be, a close and impartial study can solve nearly every one of them. No doubt, in order to do so, we must suppose a series of goings and comings, which would be astonishing on any other occasion. But when we recollect how extraordinary and how overwhelming the situation was for the disciples who were divided between discouragement and hope, we are less astonished by the agitation which leads them again and again to the neighbourhood of the tomb. Even the angels, the inhabitants of heaven, seem to have shared this significant eagerness concerning the great miracle, allowing themselves to be seen in varying numbers, outside or inside the sepulchre, as if to indicate that, although they were unseen, they remained, nevertheless, around the tomb, where it was their duty to glorify the Risen One.

In view of this, if the Evangelists divide up the details of this vivid scene, and if no one of them has all the details at once, this is not peculiar to the account of the Resurrection, and we have very frequently pointed out this independence in the course of the Gospel history. In substance, it is easy to see that St. John joins hands with St. Luke and the two other Synoptics in showing that Jesus manifested Himself to the disciples in Jerusalem as well as in Galilee. But before the compilation of the Gospels, St. Paul (*I Cor.* xv, 5-7) had already grouped in a single testimony the apparitions of the Master to Peter, to the Twelve, to an assembly of five hundred disciples, to James, and to all the other Apostles. His testimony, however summary it may be, is of considerable importance, and we shall see what use may be made of it, in behalf of the chronological disposition of the various appearances.

ten to the tomb.[2] That moment, wherein the dawn begins to dispel the darkness of the night, was precisely the symbolic hour chosen by the prophets in their poetical descriptions to denote the transition from sadness to joy and from suffering to happiness. The eager group might therefore well seem the living image of humanity struggling to reach through the last shadows that were floating above its head[3] to the glorious day of its own resurrection.

Among these faithful friends, the first to be seen is Mary Magdalen. She was to yield the place of honour to no one. By her side was the other Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, who seems to have been her inseparable companion in her days of trial. Salome, and Joanna the wife of Chusa were there, too, and with them several others whom gratitude and admiration had long since drawn to follow Jesus.

Not knowing that a guard of soldiers had been sent to the sepulchre to watch the corpse, they asked each other: "Who shall roll us back the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" But God had taken care to anticipate this legitimate anxiety. For, while the guard was still watching, but probably a little before dawn, or at its first gleam, a violent and sudden shock had shaken the tomb and the garden in which it stood. It was the Dead Who awoke from His sleep and Who, with His almighty power, broke the bonds that bound Him. All at once, descending from

[2] According to St. John it is *very early and yet dark*: πρωΐ σκοτίας ἔτι οὔσης; according to St. Luke it is also *very early in the morning*: ὄρθρου βαθέος; according to St. Matthew, the first day of the week was *beginning to dawn*: τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ; according to St. Mark, it was also *very early in the morning*, but the sun was beginning to appear: ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου. All this simply means λίαν πρωΐ, that it was the moment when the dawn, κροκόπεπλος ἠώς, gilds the heavens with its first light, for although he remarks that it was dark, St. John observes that Magdalen saw the entrance of the sepulchre open and the stone removed.

[3] *Is.* xlviii, 8, 10; xlviii, 11, etc.; *Os.* vi, 3, 10, 15.

on high, like a servant opening the door for the master who is ready to depart,[4] the angel of the Lord threw back the stone of the sepulchre, and, rolling it aside, he seated himself upon it, full of glory and of beauty. His countenance shone like the lightning, and his garments were white as snow. At sight of him, the guards, seized with fright, had been struck down and for a moment had lain as if half dead.[5]

They were but just recovering from their terror, fleeing, it may be, in every direction, when the holy women arrived. The stone which in a vertical position closed the sepulchre was very great, as St. Mark observes, and it was easy for the latter to see from a distance that it had been removed, and that consequently the tomb was open. This unexpected incident, and perhaps, too, the appearance of armed men whom they saw fleeing in haste, gave them the notion that a crime had been committed on the dead body of the Master. For it was possible that the chief priests, jealous of the honourable burial given to Jesus, had caused the body to be removed and thrown into a common grave with those of the thieves. Magdalen's quick and lively imagination at once foresees the unworthy sacrilege. Suddenly retracing her steps, the pious soul hastens to Peter and John, and tells them the astounding news. Simon Peter was not

[4] It is not said, however, that Jesus came forth from the tomb at that moment, still less that the soldiers had seen Him come forth. It may be that the stone over the opening was thrown back violently only to prove the absence of the dead body in the tomb.

[5] This scene, which in our opinion preceded the arrival of the pious women, must have been learned from the story of the soldiers themselves, who reported it officially to the members of the Sanhedrim and, it may be, confidentially to their friends. But there were, among both of these parties, followers of Jesus who did not suffer such important testimony to be lost. Moreover, it cannot be concluded from verse 11 of St. Matthew, that all the soldiers allowed themselves to be bribed by the gold of the priests. The centurion, whom we have seen so deeply impressed by the holiness of the Crucified, might have obtained from his men revelations that rejoiced the nascent Church.

only the first of the Apostles by his authority, he was also the most valorous and the most devoted. He had shown at Gethsemane that he could quickly suit the action to the word, and he could be relied on for a telling stroke. By her own experience, moreover, the converted woman knew the need of every good heart to prove its love after an act of ingratitude. Peter was probably lodging in the same house with John. Magdalen expected, therefore, to notify both at the same time. Had not John been the one faithful friend even as far as Calvary, and, as he was acquainted with the High-Priest, if any attempts had been made against the mortal remains of Jesus, could he not more profitably than any other undertake some plan to prevent a profanation?

Finding at last the twofold help of which she was in search, Magdalen cried out, as if she had really scanned the tomb with her own eyes:[6] "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him."[7]

Meanwhile the other women had arrived near the tomb and had had the courage to enter[8] in order to see what had taken place. Jesus was no longer there; two angels,[9] seated one on the right the other on the left, were

[6] If Magdalen had followed the other women until they reached the tomb she would have heard the announcements of the angels, and then she would not have spoken to Peter of a probable theft, but of resurrection and of angelical apparitions. Besides, the angel would not have to ask her a second time the cause of her tears. Finally, her anxiety and her incredulity, after the angelical message, would be unintelligible.

[7] The plural *οἴδαμεν*, used by St. John, after having presented Magdalen proceeding alone to the tomb, suggests the presence of other women. It is quite natural, moreover, to see Magdalen start out at an early hour while it is still night rather than day, not alone, but escorted by other friends of Jesus, as eager as herself to proceed to embalm the Dead.

[8] The tombs of the great Jewish families were vast caverns often fifteen feet deep and quite as wide.

[9] St. Luke and St. John mention two; St. Mark and St. Matthew speak only of one; but, as we have said above, the latter supposes him outside

guarding the spot where the corpse had been laid. They were clad in white and appeared all radiant with light. This unexpected vision filled the holy women with fear and they at once threw themselves prostrate, hiding their faces against the ground. But one of the two angels reassured them saying: "Fear not you; for I know that you seek Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified. Why seek you the living with the dead? He is risen, He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. Remember how He spoke unto you, when He was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of man [10] must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He is risen. He will go before you into Galilee. There you shall see Him, as He told you.[11] Lo, I have foretold it to you."

Such was the first discourse pronounced on the resurrection of Jesus Christ. In reality, no more simple or more

of the tomb, whereas St. Mark says he is inside. Apart from any theory defending the absolute exactitude of the Evangelists, we may say that this twofold divergence is less important, since the angels, visible or invisible, must have been numerous in this spot, where the glory of God had just shone forth so marvellously. Pious souls might have seen them appearing and disappearing in the most various attitudes. The only fact on which the Evangelists ought not to vary is that of their presence in the tomb, as they were at the cradle of Jesus. They had assumed a human form; this is why they are called ἄνδρες by *St. Luke* xxiv, 4; νεανίσκον by *St. Mark* xvi, 5; cf. *Acts* i, 10.

[10] The angel recalls here the title of Son of man which Jesus assumed when alive, but which He employs no longer after His Resurrection.

[11] It has been remarked that *St. Luke* xxiv, 5, *et seq.*, does not mention the meeting-place in Galilee. Was this because he had knowledge only of the apparitions in Jerusalem? As a matter of fact these are the only ones he reports. But can we admit that the companion and disciple of St. Paul was ignorant of the others? In *Acts* i, 3, he gives one to understand that he knew of more than he spoke of. However, if he defines—which one would not by any means have thought in reading the end of his Gospel—that there was an interval of forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension, he seems to follow a tradition that mentioned neither the return of the Apostles nor the apparitions of Jesus in Galilee, *Acts* i, 4.

complete argument has since been imagined to prove the great miracle which is the foundation stone of Christianity. Jesus was placed in the tomb, and He is no longer there. This is the first fact impressed on the witnesses. Before His death, He had announced that it would be so, and His Resurrection is an event not fortuitous but foreseen; this is a second fact no less certain and having its own importance. Lastly, men will be summoned to see for themselves directly the reality of the Resurrection by the sight and the touch of the Risen One. This is the third fact, and it must complete the demonstration for the most incredulous.

Jesus had always cherished the project of re-establishing His Church in Galilee, when He should have risen again.[12] It was there that she had been born, it was there she had grown, and it was there she ought to find the best elements of progress, thanks to the upright and energetic character of the good people who dwelt there. The flock, scattered for a time, can therefore come together again; the Shepherd still lives; He is going to appear once more and guide His lambs, as He goes on before them into Galilee.

The angels do not mean to deny that He will appear at all before the Galilean believers shall have regained their homes. They simply put off to that moment His more frequent and more familiar manifestations. That is why the Evangelists, though maintaining their words, do not think they contradict them by the apparitions occurring in Jerusalem and which they are going to relate to us immediately.

Meanwhile the holy women, seized with fear as well as with joy at such astonishing news, had departed in haste

[12] *St. Mark* xiv, 28; *St. Matt.* xxvi, 32.

from the tomb, to hurry at the top of their speed towards the city in search of the Apostles. Their emotion, although it hastened their steps, kept them dumb,[13] and they related the prodigious event only to the Apostles themselves when they had found them. The latter, convinced that they were the victims of an illusion, refused to give any credence to their story.

It is well to remember, in order to harmonise all the Evangelists' accounts, that at this time Peter and John were not with them. They had been informed separately, but in different terms, by Magdalen, and were already running[14] with all their might in the direction of the tomb, which they thought had been treacherously violated. John, who was younger than Peter, was the first to arrive, but, either out of deference for his companion, or from a sentiment of secret fear as he saw the open sepulchre, he did not dare to enter. Leaning forward—they probably had to descend some steps, although the door was vertical

[13] To suppose with several critics that *St. Mark* xvi, 8, means that they kept what they had seen an absolute secret, is to attribute to the Evangelists something very improbable in order to have the pleasure of raising a useless difficulty. They are silent on the road, but they speak on reaching the house. *St. Matt.* xxviii, 8; *St. Luke* xxiv, 10 and 23.

[14] If, as the majority of the manuscripts bear witness, *St. Luke* xxiv, 12, is authentic, one would have reason to be surprised that after the disciples had ridiculed the pious women and had refused to believe them, Peter should have risen at once and run to the tomb. The truth is that St. Luke sets down in this place, as if by chance, a detail which he has found in the documents he is using, but in which all the other details are wanting. One feels that there is a certain indecision and vagueness in his account, and verse 12 comes from a source different from verse 11. Verse 24 likewise suggests something not related. He stands by that scrupulous fidelity which, here as elsewhere, makes it a duty for him to write down everything he knows, even if it should contradict that which precedes. But St. John quite appropriately explains that which seems to be inexplicable. The holy women have spoken to the disciples, and Magdalen has talked with Peter and John who at that time were probably *not* with the principal group of the faithful. Besides this, it will be observed that *St. Luke* xxiv, 24, in reporting that the disciples at Emmaus said: "Some of our people went to the sepulchre," corroborates St. John's statement, since he employs the plural after having mentioned only Peter.

—we have already seen that they saw the open door from a distance—he simply looked around the interior, and saw only the winding sheet lying on the ground. Simon Peter arrived immediately after him, and at once, with his ardent, resolute nature, went into the tomb. The angels were not visible to them, but the linen bands had been loosed and were lying on the floor, and the cere-cloth which had enveloped the Master's head, separated from the other linens, had been rolled up and laid in a spot apart. To an attentive mind, this was a proof that the sepulchre had been the scene not of a hurried removal, but of a calm and peaceful awakening. Then John also entered the sepulchre, and with his own eyes examined the whole interior. At that moment only he felt faith again springing up within his soul. He had not yet, any more than the rest, understood the Scriptures which asserted that Jesus would rise again from the dead.

A prey to the most diverse thoughts, now full of hope and again dejected and uncertain, the two Apostles returned to the city, thinking to hear there more explicit information, and, in any case, to communicate their impressions to the others and to take counsel as to what they should do.[15]

Magdalen, who, no doubt, had arrived shortly after, let them depart without following. Of her beloved Master there now remained to her naught but the empty tomb. She could not make up her mind to leave it. Standing there, leaning on the stone, she tenderly clasped this last relic of her departed Saviour, and wet it with her tears, those precious tears which once had gained her forgiveness, and were now to merit for her the first sight of the risen Jesus. As she wept, she bent down to look into the tomb. Whether it was that her soul was better disposed

[15] *St. Luke* xxiv, 12.

than the two Apostles' to behold the manifestations of heaven, or that God would not refuse to her eager love what He had granted to her friends, who like her had first come to the sepulchre, two angels appeared to her clad in white garments, the emblem of celestial glory. Their attitude was that of servants who had completed their work, seated one at the head and the other at the foot of the glorious bed whereon the Crucified had lain. Calling her just as she leaned towards the opening of the tomb: "Woman," they said, "why weepest thou?" And she, with no evidence of fear [16] at this apparition, as if the thoughts of her grief forbade all others, merely replied: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

At the same time, by a natural movement, as if she could not sustain the sight so easily as the conversation of her questioners, or as if she sought some aid, she turned [17] and saw some one standing by her. It was Jesus; but, absorbed as she was in her grief, and looking for the dead and not the living, she did not recognise Him.[18] Moreover, her whole attention being given to the sepulchre where the heavenly apparition had just occurred, she did not

[16] Some have thought that Magdalen had taken the angels for men, either because she saw them only indistinctly, or because the sun, already up for some time, made their brightness less blinding. But we must accept the purely psychological cause, which we point out, as the cause of her familiar and ingenuous response.

[17] It may be, too, that the sound of a step, of branches pushed aside, or of leaves trampled on attracted her attention.

[18] Besides, Jesus appeared with a new physiognomy, ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ; and, in all His manifestations after death He had to *make Himself known*, sometimes by the sound of His voice, as now; again, by the breaking of the bread, etc. He was not exactly the same as before His death. This had placed Him in a new condition; that is why He says to the Apostles (*St. Luke* xxiv, 44): "While I *was* yet with you." In this new state His body shares, as it were, in the privileges of the spiritual nature to which it is absolutely subject. He renders Himself visible or invisible, He passes through closed doors. Such is the fact established by the Gospel accounts. How it is done is beyond our ken.

gaze long on Him who stood beside her. "Woman," said the Unknown, echoing the angel's question, "why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" And Magdalen, thinking that she was talking to the gardener,[19] answered Him without looking, all the while leaning towards the tomb [20] whence she awaited a clearer explanation: "Sir,[21] if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Then Jesus, in mild reproach, replied with one word: "Mary!" It was only a name; but a name on the lips of a friend is a memory, a history, a life. With one word Jesus had just expressed all that Magdalen had been to Him and all that He had been to her. At His word this woman of supreme faith trembled to the utmost depths of her being, and in the violence of her love she answered with a cry that spoke her entire soul: "Rabboni![22] Master!" At the same instant impelled as by some mysterious force, she was at Jesus' feet. Is it indeed He, really risen again and alive, Whom she hears and sees, or do ears and eyes deceive her and lead her to take for the Master Himself a mere vision sent to console her? Troubled with joy and surprise, she knows not what to believe, and her hands reach out towards Him, as though she would convince herself by touching His feet or His

[19] Some have thought that Jesus, clad in a shroud instead of a cloak, might have borne some resemblance to an ordinary peasant. The country people, in fact, wore garments of white cloth. This supposition is as gratuitous as it is odd. It is simpler to admit that Magdalen had not even scanned her questioner, or that because of the trees or of her deep emotion, she had not clearly discerned Him.

[20] The words ἐστράφη and στραφεῖσα, employed twice, prove that while replying, she was not looking at Him who spoke to her.

[21] She employs this respectful term because she feels as if she were on his domain and expects from his kindness information of the treasure she seeks, or, at least, freedom to seek it without interference.

[22] This word, of the language of Palestine which St. John translates for his Greek readers, is found in *St. Mark* x, 51.

garments. "Do not touch me," [23] said Jesus, "I am ever the same, for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren and say to them: I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God." With what tenderness Jesus calls those His brethren who have just abandoned Him so cowardly! With what solicitude He has them informed that the hour for Him to be glorified as God is at hand! He shall ascend to the right hand of His Father as soon as they are sufficiently strengthened in the faith of His Resurrection.

Jesus disappeared while Magdalen was still listening. Radiant and generous in her faith, she hastened at once to tell the disciples that she had with her own eyes beheld the Master. Thus it was penitent love that became the messenger of the great tidings, and aroused in the hearts of all hope and faith in the future.

[23] The words of Jesus, Μή μου ἅπτου, constitute one of the most difficult passages to explain in the Gospel; so much so that some, supposing it a copyist's error, propose to eliminate the negation, or to read it *fear not;* or σύ μου ἅπτου, *touch me.* But there is nothing to justify this alteration of the text. Others, therefore, have sought and proposed a series of interpretations more or less satisfactory. Thus several have translated: "Waste no time in embracing my feet, thou shalt have other opportunities to do so, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; go at once and tell the news to my brethren"; or "Do not hold me thus, I am not yet ascending to my Father." But the verb ἅπτεσθαι is not the verb κρατεῖν. Others say: "Do not adore me, for I have not yet entered into the glory of God." But without counting that if the word ἅπτεσθαι means *adore* when it governs γονάτων, the *knees*, it never does when alone, we shall see Jesus allowing the holy women ere long to clasp His knees in adoration, and still later accepting Thomas' adoration. Others give this: "My body is still in a state of transformation, do not touch me." But that same evening Jesus invites His disciples to touch Him (*St. Luke* xxiv, 39). Lastly, and this was the view we held first, a great many explain the words of Jesus thus: "Release me, the time is not yet come to keep me among you, I have not yet ascended to my Father." As if His state between the Resurrection and the Ascension was a transitory state in which He should merely appear but not remain, until by successive apparitions and disappearances He should have confirmed the faith in the hearts of the Apostles, and prepared His definitive coming by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

According to the appendix to St. Mark's Gospel, Magdalen found the Apostles in sadness and in tears. They refused to believe her testimony.[24] In the meantime, almost

[24] In *St. Mark* xvi, 9–11, it is said: "But He rising early the first day of the week, appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom He had cast seven devils. She went and told them that had been with Him, who were mourning and weeping. And they hearing that He was alive, and had been seen by her, did not believe." Evidently this is a *résumé*, if not of what is recounted in St. John, at least of what was in the oral tradition, which the fourth Gospel was to develop later on. This *résumé* raises the question as to the authenticity of the last twelve verses which we read in St. Mark.

The attentive reader will observe between verses 8 and 9 an evident break in continuity. Not only does the lively and picturesque narrative of St. Mark change in style at this point, but it resolves itself into a very succinct summing up of the apparitions reported by the other Evangelists. Thus verses 9–11 relate what is read in *St. John* xx, 1–10; verses 12–13 are an abridgment of *St. Luke* xxiv, 13–35; verse 14 refers to *St. Luke* xxiv, 36, *et seq.*, and *St. John* xx, 19, *et seq.* Verses 15–18 are inspired by the closing verses of *St. Matt.* xxviii, 16–20, while verses 19–20 recall *St. Luke* xxiv, 50–53, but with a general fusion in which it becomes difficult to distinguish the words of farewell to the Church spoken on the mountain in Galilee and the farewell to the Apostles on the day of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. The author has not even sought to join this fragment with that which precedes it. Thus, although Magdalen was mentioned in the first line of the same chapter, xvi, among the women going to the sepulchre, she comes upon the scene in verse 9, as a new character, concerning whom it is thought necessary to recall the miraculous cure in terms that recall *St. Luke* viii, 2: (ἀφ' ἧς ἐκβεβλήκει ἑπτὰ δαιμόνια, and in *St. Luke* ἀφ' ἧς δαιμόνια ἑπτὰ ἐξεληλύθει). He repeats that it was *early*, πρωΐ, and *the first day of the week*, πρώτῃ σαββάτου, as if this had not already been said above in verse 2, λίαν πρωΐ τῆς μιᾶς τῶν σαββάτων, concerning the visit of Mary Magdalen and the other women to the sepulchre.

This addition was therefore made without any attempt at concealment. Hence, at a very early date, this appendix was regarded as the work of another than St. Mark. Thus Eusebius (*ad Marin*, q. 1, in Maï, *Spicil.* i, p. 61) and St. Jerome (*ad Hedibian*, q. 3) observe that, in their time, it was found only *in rare manuscripts*. As a matter of fact, we find that it is wanting in the most ancient, *Vatic.*, *Sinait.*, and that many of the Fathers of the Church seem not to have known it. The Syriac version, recently discovered on Mt. Sinai by Mrs. Lewis, does not contain this passage. Finally, certain manuscripts have a different and rather brief ending, the style of which, however, indicates a very ancient origin. On the other hand, and this renders the problem more complicated, we find it in the Codex *Alexand.*, in the Codex *Ephrem*, and in general in all the manuscripts of the *Itala*, in the Syriac translations, *Peschito* and *Cureton*, in the *Diatessaron* of Tatian. It is even quoted, as to verse 20, in Irenæus, *Hær.* iii, 10, 60, which gives it as the termination of the Gospel of St. Mark. There

at that same moment, Jesus appeared [25] to the other women who, having received the first news of the Resurrection at the tomb, had returned to the city while Magdalen was conducting Peter and John back to the sepulchre. The two parties having followed different roads did not encounter each other. Moreover, it is not explicitly stated in St. Matthew that Jesus appeared to them while they were on the way. However that may be, the Master, as

is every reason to suppose that Justin (*Apol.* i, 39, 45, 49, etc.) had that reading. Its antiquity is, therefore, very great.

Are we to believe that it dates back to the first century? The authority which was accorded to it from the very beginning in certain parts of the Church justifies us in doing so. St. Jerome, after having weighed all the reasons for and against, decided to insert it in the *Vulgate*. As a matter of fact, verse 8 cannot be a conclusion. If the Evangelist, through some incident unknown to us, the death of Peter, perhaps, or his own death, during the persecution of Nero, left his little book unfinished, one can understand how some apostolic personage might have considered it his duty to add the concluding lines. Mr. Conybeare thought he found the solution of the difficulty in an Armenian translation discovered by him at Eschmiadzin in 1891. It was the presbyter Aristion, called by Eusebius a *disciple of the Lord* who added the appendix. In reply to this we would ask: Is a name, intercalated in red, after two blank lines and before the conclusion, at an epoch relatively quite late (the translation may be ancient, but the manuscript dates from 989 only), sufficient to support an hypothesis? After all, in the absence of other proofs, would it not be simpler to suppose that St. Mark, having been obliged to quit Rome in haste, on the death of Peter, left his book there unfinished, and that later on, either from Alexandria or from Asia Minor, he addressed to the faithful of that city a conclusion of this Gospel, which, being derived no longer from the direct, lively, and earnest preaching of the chief of the Apostles, but from the oral tradition, was a simple summary of what was related currently concerning the apparitions of Jesus? This supplement, coming when there were already numerous copies of the Gospel in circulation, continued to be excluded from a certain number of them. Hence, the long undecided fate reserved for it in the early Church. What justifies this supposition is that it seems, at least partially, to depend much more on the oral tradition (cf. verse 11, in particular) than on the written Gospels. At any rate, the Catholic Church has maintained it as canonical and consequently as derived from an authorised source. Several Protestant exegetes, overcoming a most unfair prejudice have finally acknowledged that she has done well. Cf. Godet, *Introd. au N. Test.*, Vol. II, p. 392, *et seq.*

[25] Many think that this apparition, mentioned by St. Matthew, is no other than that which happened to Magdalen, but the difference between the two accounts makes it absolutely improbable that they refer to the same incident.

He manifested Himself to them, greeted them with these words: "All hail!" Already prepared by the angel's words for the thought of the Resurrection, they were less surprised than Magdalen, but were, however, seized with reverent fear. Recognising Jesus at once by His voice as well as by His features, they clasped His knees and adored Him, their faces pressed close to the ground. Seeing their emotion, He took care first to reassure them.

"Fear not," He said. Then he thought of the disciples who above all others had to be strengthened: "Go," He said, repeating the angel's words, "tell my brethren to go into Galilee; there they shall see Me." These brethren mentioned here, as in the message given to Magdalen, are not only the Apostles, who, in reality, shall see Jesus before they return to their mountains, but all the faithful who must be persuaded to depart from Jerusalem, a neighbourhood full of danger to timid men. They must return to their homes and not worry about the future. There they shall again find their Chief, their Shepherd; there shall the Kingdom of God be established, far from the persecution of the Pharisees. To behold Him Who is risen, they must prepare themselves in retirement. The intention of Jesus is to make Himself visible to souls only in such measure as souls are ready to behold Him. Magdalen is the first to see Him, but only for a brief space; then the holy women; then must come the turn of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus; and finally the eleven all together shall receive His formal and prolonged visit. He moves by slow degrees, so that gradually and surely, faith in His resurrection may take root in their hearts.

It has been asked why Jesus did not wish to appear at once to all His faithful, in the heart of Jerusalem and in the presence of His enemies. First of all it is not certain that the apparition to the five hundred assembled disciples

did not take place at the time when the caravans were quitting the Holy City. This hypothesis is by no means untenable. But, admitting that it occurred in Galilee, it is easy to see the reasons that withheld the Saviour from appearing openly while they were still in Jerusalem. The faithful would not have failed to proclaim the great tidings on the spot, at the risk of provoking violent hostility and of arousing prematurely a storm which they were incapable of withstanding. It was better to wait until their souls should be fortified and protected by the Holy Spirit against their own weaknesses. For the time being, the providential plan seemed to be to sustain the Messianic hopes of the multitude by the thought of a meeting in Galilee, and the faith of the leaders of this multitude by partial and successive apparitions. These apparitions would suffice to prepare a final outburst of enthusiasm on the day of Pentecost, by preserving the sacred fire as a mere spark. They could not provoke the fury of the Pharisees, who simply laughed at the rumours spread abroad concerning the Risen One, as so many fables of no account.

When they ask why Jesus did not show Himself even to His enemies to confound them by His glorious triumph, rationalists forget that God distributes His grace in measure, and that in the case of those who obstinately shut their eyes He withdraws even the rays of His light. Faith is meritorious only in so far as it does not exact evidence. The Jews did not believe in the word or in the works of Jesus; they are judged. Nor would they believe more in the life of the One Risen from the dead, and, in any case, they would believe without merit like the demons of Hell. God demands the confident assent of the heart, which the murderers, though beholding their Victim risen again, were no longer able to give. But, as regards the disciples

themselves, we must not think that Jesus manifested Himself in the physical condition in which He had previously lived. His condition was altogether supernatural; He appeared and disappeared suddenly; men recognised Him only when He desired to be recognised, either by His voice or by His physical appearance. He was the Risen One, and to be able to distinguish Him in His new state there was needed that spiritual eye the opening of which God reserved to Himself.[26] The soul had to be prepared for this supernatural vision; the souls of the enemies of Jesus were not ready since those of His friends were only imperfectly so. To the Pharisees and their allies Jesus could appear only to judge them. But the day of judgment had not yet dawned.

It happened, however, that, without appearing to His enemies, Jesus made His resurrection known to them, through witnesses who were beyond suspicion. For, while on the one hand, representatives of the nascent Church, who had come to embalm the body, were ordered to go and announce the resurrection to their brethren, on the other hand the guards posted by the chief priests to detain Him in the tomb, found themselves strangely forced to proclaim to their masters that the Dead had disappeared. Thus friends and enemies hastily returned to the city because the sepulchre was empty, the former overjoyed at such happy tidings, and the latter full of terror at so strange an event.

St. Matthew observes, in fact, that they all made their entrance into Jerusalem at nearly the same moment. "Who (the women), when they were departed," he says, "behold some of the guards came into the city, and told the chief priests all that had been done." Such was, therefore, the official notification of the resurrection that the

[26] *St. Luke* xxiv, 31; *St. John* xx, 16.

Sanhedrim had insured for itself through the pitiless irony of fate. It would have been well had it profited thereby even then! But the wicked see good only to hate it the more, and liars are ready to go to any extreme in order to stifle the truth. They conspired therefore to discover what answer could be made to such disquieting tidings; and, as each one clearly saw its grave consequences, it was decided that they must continue their triumph unto the end. Besides, what would have been the situation of His murderers, if the Victim had been publicly recognised as just and holy by divine testimony? What would have become of the faction that had persecuted Him, if the persecuted One were supremely glorified? The Sanhedrists determined, therefore, to seal with gold the mouths of the unfortunate witnesses whom they had sent to ascertain the triumph of their Victim. It was a bold project. They adopted it, however, and paid the soldiers to say: "His disciples came by night, and stole him away when we were asleep."

The Gospel observes that the sum of money given to them was in proportion to the falsehood demanded. At that rate the compensation must have been considerable, for it was a great crime obstinately to disfigure the work of God Who so visibly revealed Himself. Moreover, the absurdity of their allegation was not less great. The guards had slept and they had seen; they had seen and they had not prevented. The explanation they gave of the miracle was quite worthy of men who were asleep when they concocted it. But with gold it has always been easy to make the needy say what is desired, especially when the bribe, coming from a higher source, guarantees a defence whatever may happen. In the present case, if the soldiers on duty were the ushers of the Temple, the Sanhedrim was the absolute master of the servants; if, as we have sup-

posed, they were of the Roman army, it was possible to persuade them that in the scene at the sepulchre they had been the victims of some fraud, or of some experiment of magic prepared by the disciples. Pagans would naturally be credulous. If there had been a supernatural intervention prepared by the Apostles, the soldiers could not be held responsible before Pilate. No one is obliged to fight against invisible and unknown forces. In any case, they were to hold to the general assertion that was to satisfy the vain curiosity of the people: the disciples have taken Him away. If Pilate should busy himself with the popular report, the chief priests took it upon themselves to defend those concerned by establishing, when necessary, in private, the facts just as they occurred, but allowing at the same time the report to go among the people that a theft had been committed, and that a deception had been successfully carried out.

The soldiers were readily persuaded. They took the money, and the report was spread among the Jews that the disciples had taken the body away. St. Matthew says that it still gained some credit at the time when he was writing his Gospel; traces of it are found in the Talmud,[27] and St. Justin tells us in what form the Sanhedrim communicated the incident to the Jews who inhabited Palestine, or who dwelt in foreign parts.[28]

Thus on the morning of that great day, the whole city

[27] Cf. the odious book *Toledoth Jeschu*, quoted in Eisenmenger, *Entdeckt. Judenth.* i, p. 190, *et seq.*

[28] *Dial. c. Tryphon.*, 108: "An unlawful and impious sect has arisen," said these emissaries, "having as their founder a Galilean impostor named Jesus. When we had crucified Him, His disciples in the night (*νυκτὸς*) took Him from the tomb (*κλέψαντες αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ μνήματος*), where His body, taken down from the cross, had been laid. They are now deceiving everybody (*πλανῶσι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους*) with the belief that He has risen again from the dead and has ascended into heaven." Cf. Tertullian, *Apol.*, 21, and *Spect.*, 30; Origen, *c. Cels.* i, 56, and *Acta Pilati*, in Thilo, p. 615.

learned from an official source that the body of the Crucified was no longer in the tomb. According to some, the disciples had hidden it; according to others, no one knew what had become of it. A few asserted, on the word of the angels, that He had risen again. Surpassing them all, the holy women maintained that they had seen Him alive.

CHAPTER II

THE AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

The Two Disciples Going to Emmaus—The Third Traveller who joins in their Conversation—What Occupies their Attention—The Great Lesson of Apologetic Exegesis—"Stay with us, Because it is Towards Evening"—They knew Him in the Breaking of Bread—Their Hurried Return to Jerusalem—Jesus had Appeared to Peter; the Conjectural Apparition to Mary His Mother. (St. Luke, xxiv, 13–32; St. Mark, xvi, 12–13.)

During the afternoon of the same day two disciples departed for Emmaus, a borough situated sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. All that we know of them is that one of them was named Cleophas. This name, given with no further information,[1] represents probably a new personage in the Gospel story, and we cannot recognise in him the father of James and of Joseph. As for the other, the most diverse and most gratuitous conjectures have been made concerning his identity.[2]

[1] *St. Luke* xxiv, 18, mentions it accidentally to designate the one who first replied to Jesus.

[2] According to some, it was either James in company with his father Clopas, or Peter himself, who, however, is excluded by verses 22 and 24; according to others it was Nathanael. Several even think it was St. Luke. In relating this incident in which he fortunately participated, they say he made it a duty to remain anonymous. But the candour of the story, how-

The village of Emmaus, whither they were bound, is not, as Eusebius and St. Jerome believed, the capital of the toparchy which later took the name of Nicopolis,[3] south-east from Lydda, and one hundred and seventy-six furlongs from Jerusalem. The place here meant is a place less distant,[4] and Josephus in fact mentions a village of

ever striking, is not enough to sustain this opinion. Even if it were not almost certain that St. Luke, who was of pagan origin and lived far from Jerusalem, could not at that date have been connected in any way with this incident of the Gospel story, the Aramaic colouring of this passage is sufficient to indicate that the Evangelist found it already prepared in the documents which he had at hand.

[3] *I Mach.* iii, 40, 57.

[4] Elsewhere the author has written at length (*Voyage aux Pays Bibliques*, Vol. I, p. 186, *et seq.*, and *Revue Biblique*, Jan., 1892, p. 101, *et seq.*) against the persistent error of those who wish with Eusebius and St. Jerome to identify the Emmaus in *St. Luke* with Emmaus Nicopolis, celebrated in the wars of the Machabees and capital of a toparchy in the time of Jesus Christ (Josephus, *B. J.*, iii, 3, 5; *Pliny, H. N.*, v, 14). First of all, this latter town, according to the *Itinerarium Hieros.*, was twenty-two miles from Jerusalem or, since an Olympic furlong was an eighth of a Roman mile, one hundred and seventy-six furlongs. The true reading, *St. Luke* xxiv, 13, says that the place to which the disciples were going was sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. Some manuscripts, only one of which, the *Sinaiticus*, dates back to the fourth century, contain a correction inspired by the same error into which Eusebius had fallen, and we read in them one hundred and sixty furlongs. Cf. the excellent dissertation by the Rev. Fr. Lagrange, *Revue Biblique*, 1896, pp. 87–92. Besides, this ill-advised correction does not correct anything, for one hundred and sixty is not one hundred and seventy-six. Moreover, it is evident that the two disciples would not and could not walk a journey of twenty-two miles in one evening; for, in fact, they went to Emmaus and returned probably in one afternoon. It does not appear that they took any midday meal on the journey, and in the evening, setting out from Emmaus after sunset and even after supper, they arrive in Jerusalem before the Apostles have retired to rest, *οὔσης . . . ὀψίας* in *St. John* xx, 19, that is, at night. Cf. *St. Mark* xiii, 35, in which the precise meaning of *ὀψέ* is given with relation to midnight. In fact they had gone out for a walk: *δυσὶν . . . περιπατοῦσιν*, according to *St. Mark* xvi, 12, and they were going not to an important town, but to a modest village *εἰς κώμην*, *St. Luke* xxiv, 13, situated in the rural districts, adds St. Mark, *εἰς ἀγρόν*. Josephus (*B. J.*, vii, 6, 6) tells us of a place that bore the name Emmaus, *χωρίον . . . ὃ καλεῖται Ἀμμαοῦς*, sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, which was given over to eight hundred veterans of the Roman army after the destruction of Jerusalem. The number sixty in Josephus, as well as in St. Luke, has been contested, some saying it should be one hundred and sixty, others only thirty, but without any serious arguments in support of their contention. We must therefore seek within a radius of sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, for

Emmaus sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, in the territory of which, after the war with the Jews, Titus settled eight hundred veterans. Where was the exact site of this town? It is impossible to say for certain.

They were journeying on, talking of what had just occurred in Jerusalem. Their exchange of impressions contained something of sadness and of discouragement. As if by chance, a third traveller joined them on the way, and set out to travel with them. This traveller was none other than Jesus; but they did not recognise Him. On the one hand, nothing was farther from their minds than to expect to see beside them Him Whom they knew to be in the tomb or at least among the dead; and on the other, Jesus had assumed the outward seeming of a traveller met by chance. As we have already said, it was one of the peculiarities of the Risen Jesus to change His appearance, to allow Himself to be seen, and to disappear at will.[5] The newcomer entered familiarly into the conversation of the two

the Emmaus of the Gospel, which, it seems, must be identified as that of Josephus. At the very outset one would think of Kolonieh, which name recalls the colony of veterans; but Kolonieh is not sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, and hence Kolonieh can only serve as a mark to point out the region in which the veterans had been located. The χωρίον . . . ὃ καλεῖται Ἀμμαοῦς might extend towards the west as far as Kiriet-el-Anab, or towards the north as far as Koubeibeh, both exactly sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. We know that the latter site is the one maintained by Franciscan tradition. In that case, the colony of veterans extended from south to north, between the two highways which on the west led to Jerusalem. It may be that Beth-Mitsa or Mosa, Hamosa with the article, identified in the Talmud, *Sukkah*, iv, 5, as Kolonieh, and which is found in the Ouadi that joins Koubeibeh and Kolonieh, preserves very nearly the name of the little district of Emmaus where, according to the Talmud again, the people went to gather palms for the Feast of Tabernacles. As for Kiriet-el-Anab, indicated in the documents of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (cf. *Pélerinages Français*, in 8°, Geneva, 1882), it has in its favour the fountain near which Jesus and the two disciples are said to have eaten, and which in the time of the Crusades was called the *Fountain of the Emauz*, and is still preserved under the crypt of the Church of Abou-Gosch. Cf. Mauss, *L'Église de St. Jérémie à Abou-Gosch*, Paris, 1892.

[5] This is what St. Mark means by ἐφανερώθη ἐν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ.

friends. "What are these discourses that ye hold one with another as ye walk, and are sad?" He asked them. By His question, the speaker gave them to understand that He had not even a suspicion of their painful thoughts. The disciples were greatly astonished to find, at the very gates of Jerusalem, a man so little acquainted with the grave happenings that filled their minds, and one of them, named Cleophas, exclaimed with some hastiness: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days?" "What things?" returned Jesus, affecting more and more an ignorance that was painful to men so filled with their subject. Then, with an indignation which must have gladdened their questioner, since it revealed a faith eager to find expression, they answered: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, Who was a Prophet, mighty in work and word before God and all the people. And how our chief priests and princes delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him." One perceives by their hurried speech that their lips speak from the fulness of their hearts. They seem to interrupt each other, each helping the other to narrate more fully the extraordinary happenings of which their new companion is ignorant. Then, in a tone of sadness that betrays, if not complete disappointment, at least profound anxiety, they add: "But we hoped that it was [6] He that should have redeemed Israel; and now besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done." They dare not utter that which underlies their thoughts, that Jesus had promised to rise again the third day, and that they can no longer count on the fulfilment of His promise. "Yea," they add, "and certain women also of our company affrighted us, who before it was light were at the sepulchre; and not finding His body, came saying

[6] Several manuscripts have "We hope that he is."

that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that He is alive." It is surprising not to find mentioned here the first reports of the apparition; but the very tone of the recital shows that the two disciples did not wish to seem too credulous. They speak of the angelic vision as of something that might have taken place especially in the imagination of the women. "And some of our people," [7] they continue, "went to the sepulchre, and found it so as the women had said, but Him they found not." These last words confirm what the Evangelists say of the absolute incredulity of the disciples, when the women had come to report the apparition of the Risen Jesus. The two travellers do not honour their account of it with even a mere mention. It was even more improbable than their visions of angels and supernatural beings.

The Master had questioned and listened long enough. His turn to speak had come, and He did so in words lively enough to astonish His questioners, were they not in harmony with their most cherished hopes, and sustained moreover by a peremptory proof: "O foolish, and slow of heart to believe in all the things which the prophets have spoken," He said. "Ought not [8] Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?" Foolish indeed; blind like all the Jews, they have read only a part of the Messianic prophecies, that part which shows the Messiah triumphant and glorious; had they turned back the page, they would have seen that humiliation was to precede glory, and that the resurrection had necessarily

[7] Here is a fresh proof that we must not allow ourselves to be checked by details apparently divergent, but in reality only incomplete. It seemed, according to St. Luke, that St. Peter had gone alone to the tomb (v. 12) and the same St. Luke now supposes that he was not alone. The correction, made as if haphazard, is only the more important for that reason.

[8] Again we encounter the inexorable δεῖ, *must* (*St. Matt.* xxvi, 54; *St. Mark* viii, 31; *St. Luke* xxiv, 7, 36; *St. John* xii, 34), etc., which should have struck the two disciples, and reminded them of the Master's language.

to be introduced by the cross and the tomb. Such was the divine plan, and none could alter it in the slightest degree.

Then He began to give them a beautiful lesson of exegetic theology. The field was broad. Commencing with Moses, He passed in review all the prophets, one by one. Finding Himself announced on each page of their books, He pointed out to His entranced listeners how Jesus of Nazareth had fulfilled, even in the slightest details, all the Messianic oracles. More particularly He brought home to them how the sufferings of the Messiah were the necessary condition of His glorification and of the redemption of the world. Thus, once again, He proved, in the eyes of the faithful, that the Scriptures were really the Book in which God had, by the pen of the inspired writers, traced in advance the portrait and the history of His Son. In all probability, most of the applications of Scripture which the Apostles, after Pentecost, made to the principal events in the life of their Master, were only a reproduction of those given by Jesus Himself.

This interesting conversation made the journey seem quite short. They had arrived in the little town whither the two disciples were bound. Jesus feigned a desire to continue on His way. He particularly wished to sound these two hearts already so deeply stirred. Had they a true desire to hear more from this incomparable apologist? Did the grace they had just received beget in them a thirst for a greater grace? Or did their vain curiosity prefer to stop there? The two disciples, full of hope and already penetrated with supernatural fervour, responded to the pious test just as Jesus wished. They refused to allow Him to depart. Their souls were eager to hear again these words that suited so well their secret aspirations. The most pressing entreaties were brought to bear upon the

traveller to force Him to remain. They said to Him: "Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent." It was above all in their hearts, since the scenes of the Passion, that the day had been waning. Jesus consented to go in with them to the house where they had intended to pass the night. We do not know whether this dwelling belonged to them or to some member of their family. More probably, since they seem to have been alone at table with Jesus, they were at an inn, or in some unoccupied dwelling whither they had brought their food themselves.

When supper time came, the head of the table was assigned to the mysterious traveller. Ordinarily, the father of the family blessed the meal, but he gave up his place to a doctor of the law, if one were present in the gathering, and the latter, after breaking the bread, distributed it to the guests. This Jesus did. There was, doubtless, in His prayer something so suave, in His voice an accent so penetrating, that the souls of the disciples, already deeply moved, no longer failed to recognise Him Who spoke the language of heaven. The breaking of the bread completed the revelation. Whether it was that Jesus consecrated this bread, as on the night of the Last Supper, or that He attached merely an enlightening grace to the piece that He gave them, the result was the same. For, through the bread, the light radiated on Him Who offered it. The eyes of the two disciples, sealed till then, were opened, and the Master appeared transfigured. There was a moment of ecstatic rapture unfortunately too brief. And when the Master, having consoled and strengthened their faith, had suddenly vanished,[9] they began to sum up

[9] The expression ἄφαντος ἐγένετο ἀπ' αὐτῶν indicates that Jesus returned to His ordinary state, that is, He became invisible. He had left that condition in appearing to the disciples.

their impressions. "Was not our heart burning within us," [10] they said to each other, "whilst He spoke in the way and opened to us the Scriptures?" Thus, gladly did they go back to that moment in which they had felt faith springing again in their hearts, and the spark of their hopes lighting once more beneath Jesus' powerful breath. The soul, even when certain of dwelling in the serene and tranquil regions of sanctity, loves the memory of the decisive moment that preceded its transformation, because that moment, more than any other, was the moment of mercy and love.

The two travellers, forgetful of the meal that had hardly begun, arose at once and, unable to keep the good tidings to themselves a moment longer, hastened to Jerusalem to announce it to the Apostles. They found the Eleven and the other disciples assembled, a prey to deep emotion.[11] Since the story of the holy women, new information of special importance had reached them; it was from Peter assuring them that he had seen the Master.

We know nothing of this apparition which St. Paul,[12] however, cites as the first of all. Such omissions, surprising though they may appear, are sufficiently indicated by the Evangelists themselves to justify us in making allowance for those that are not recounted. Thus, what more natural than to suppose that Jesus had appeared to His mother? And yet such an apparition is nowhere mentioned.

It was probably a short time previous to the departure of the disciples for Emmaus, that Jesus appeared to

[10] Does this observation, so intimate and so ingenuously truthful, reveal the author of the account reproduced here by the Evangelist, and was this author one of the two disciples? It is not impossible.

[11] Therefore the two travellers were not themselves of the number of the Eleven.

[12] *I Cor.* xv, 6.

Simon.[13] The first two official apparitions seem therefore to have been for Mary the sinner, and for Simon the renegade; as if those hearts which were the most filled with repentance were also the most ready to receive grace.

These astonishing accounts from so many different witnesses, deeply stirred the minds of all; but St. Mark tells us that they did not yet succeed in convincing the whole apostolic circle;[14] for this a manifestation was needed in the presence of them all. Jesus did not suffer them to retire to rest without that consolation.

[13] It is remarkable that Peter, as well as his brothers, calls himself Simon instead of Peter, ever since his denial, as if he were one who had fallen from his dignity, and from whom is taken the title of nobility received in the moment of victory on the field, and afterwards lost in a shameful defeat.

[14] Here again there is a divergence between the appendix of *St. Mark* xi, 13: *οὐδὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπίστευσαν*, and the account in *St. Luke* xxiv, 34, where the Apostles receive the two disciples with the words: *ὅτι, ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος ὄντως*. No doubt we may suppose that opinion was divided, or else that the Apostles refused to believe, not that Jesus had risen, since He had appeared to Peter, but that He had also manifested Himself to the two disciples. In any case, the independence of the conclusion of St. Mark is evident here, since it seems to contradict St. Luke, while still appearing to be a *résumé* of his account.

CHAPTER III

THE EVENING OF THE RESURRECTION

THE FIRST APPARITION TO THE APOSTOLIC CIRCLE—THE MEETING OF THE APOSTLES—THE CLOSED DOORS—NO PHANTOM—"HANDLE AND SEE"—THE UNREASONABLENESS OF DOUBT—MISSION GIVEN THE APOSTLES WHILE AWAITING PENTECOST—POWER OF REMITTING SINS. (St. Luke, xxiv, 36–44; St. John, xx, 19–25; St. Mark, xvi, 14.)

EVERYTHING, therefore, had largely contributed that day to prepare the Apostles for the decisive manifestation that was to bring it to a close.[1] The sepulchre was empty; since morning every one must have become convinced of it. Magdalen first, then the holy women, claimed to have seen Jesus risen again. Peter also had just had his apparition, and the disciples from Emmaus confirmed all this by saying that they had travelled, had talked a long time and had even eaten with Him. Whatever hesitation the Apostolic college may still have felt before such solemn affirmations, it is none the less true that their hearts must have been profoundly moved. They had, if not the hope, at least a strong desire to prove the strange prodigy for themselves.

[1] *St. Luke* xxiv, 36, *et seq.*; *St. John* xx, 19, and the conclusion of *St. Mark* xvi, 14, agree very well as to the hour: *late that same day*, says St. John; *as they were at table*, says St. Mark; *on the return of the disciples from Emmaus*, says St. Luke.

Their conversation naturally turned upon the various stories of the apparitions. Each one discussed, attacked or defended them as seemed most likely. The doors of the room in which they were assembled had been carefully closed. There was need of precaution against the imprudent, and especially against enemies. No one concealed the fact that the rumours that had spread in the city since morning might become the signal for a violent persecution. A vague fear hovered over the poor little flock. Suddenly Jesus becoming visible, was there,[2] in the midst of His own who at once recognised Him. But, as He had entered while the doors were yet shut, they believed that they were in the presence of a spirit, and, forgetting every other danger, they became filled with that instinctive feeling of terror that is caused by any manifestation from the other world.

"Peace be to you!" said Jesus, at once, wishing to reassure them. This expression *shalom lekem*, was the usual salutation among the Jews; but in using it now, the Master surely referred to the promise of His last farewell. Not sufficiently in control of themselves to understand the allusion, they displayed even greater fear on hearing Him speak, Whom they had taken for a phantom. "It is I," added the Master, "fear not." With tender kindness, He affirmed His own identity. Yet, how different from what He was before His death and above all in His Passion! He presented Himself triumphant before those who had basely abandoned Him. The consciousness of their defection and of their incredulity stirred up in them all a deep feeling of shame and, also, a legitimate fear. But He, astonished, as it were, to find that His presence inspired any emotion

[2] *St. Luke* xxiv, 36, and *St. John* xx, 19, the two Evangelists who agree so well in relating this apparition which is merely mentioned in *St. Mark* xvi, 14, employ the same expression ἔστη, to signify how sudden was this apparition of Jesus.

other than joy and confidence, asked: "Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" It was therefore ever the same eye that scanned the depths of the soul; death had not deprived it of its divine penetration. It read the secret objections, the private discussions, the hesitation that withheld the Apostles from recognising purely and simply Him Who had returned to them from the dead. There was, too, the same mercy which no obstinacy could tire, the same kindness that placed itself generously within reach of the very weakest. By these signs, alone, the Master could not remain unrecognised.

However, that the demonstration may be complete, He determines to give further signs. It is not the soul alone that appears here, it is also the body in its reality; and for this reason is the Resurrection perfect. For the essence of the Resurrection lies not in the survival of the spiritual principle, but in the renewal of the corporeal life. Although remaining entirely subject to the empire of the soul, passing through space, appearing and disappearing at her command, the body of the Risen Jesus has nevertheless a real physical existence. It lives in the conditions of a superior and to us unknown world, but it can, whenever it will, establish itself in the conditions of the world in which we live ourselves. The mode, not the reality, of its existence is changed.

"See my hands and feet," He said to them, "that it is I myself; handle and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you can see Me to have." At the same time He showed them His hands, His feet and His side with their glorious wounds. It was indeed He Himself, still retaining in His triumph the horrible traces of His martyrdom. The Apostles could not believe their eyes. Their joy and wonder were so great that they still seemed undecided. Then prolonging the proof still further, Jesus added:

"Have you here anything to eat?" They had almost finished supper; they handed Him a piece of broiled fish—fishermen by profession they were naturally provided with such food—and a honeycomb. Jesus ate, not because He needed to eat, such a supposition would destroy the theological idea of a glorified body, but in order to prove the reality of His corporeal nature.[3]

When they saw Him take the food in His hands, eat it and distribute it to those around Him, the Apostles no longer doubted. The Master again entered into their life, they at once became familiar with Him, and thought they should now have Him for ever. We shall later on hear them recalling the fact that they had eaten with Him.[4] It was then that Jesus began gently to reproach them for their incredulity and for the obstinacy of their hearts in the presence of the many proofs of His Resurrection received since morning. He showed them how, when He was still living He had prophesied all that happened, and how, before Him, the inspired writers from Moses and the authors of the Psalms down to the last of the Prophets had looked upon the humiliation of the Messiah as the essential preliminary of His supreme glorification. That the demonstration might be more profitable by becoming more intelligible, He enlightened their minds, and then the meaning of the Scriptures became wonderfully clear to them.[5]

[3] As we have already shown, the idea we may form of a risen and glorified body is that it lends itself passively to all the desires of the soul, and has no needs other than those of the soul itself. Without being annihilated, it is subjected to the soul under such conditions that it follows all the latter's desires, and disregards the laws of physical nature, viz.: the laws of density, of space, of impenetrability, etc., at the soul's command. Jesus, therefore, could prove by the most elementary actions of the sensible order, that His corporeal nature had really risen again.

[4] *Acts* x, 41.

[5] After the account of this apparition, there is, in St. Luke, a hiatus which interferes considerably with the historical perspective. One would say that, as they approached the end of their work, our Evangelists, like the author of

As this conviction penetrated their soul, it brought with it a great joy. Could anything more fortunate occur to them than to feel their faith spring again more lively than ever? Thus they themselves entered into a new life on the evening of this great day of the Resurrection, and their hearts were no less ardent, as they listened to the Master's words, than those of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Jesus, Who, to calm their anxiety and to put an end to their hesitation, had already once said: "Peace be to you," again uttered this same wish, but with another meaning in His words. For, now, it is for the future that He wishes them peace and fidelity to their new obligations.

the *Acts*, gave less care to their production, and that the end comes about, leaving the story somewhat unfinished. Thus, St. Matthew after mentioning the apparition to the holy women, ends hurriedly with the apparition to the Eleven in Galilee on the Mount indicated in advance and he leaves us under the impression that some still doubted concerning the miracle. It is true that in speaking of a meeting appointed for the Apostles, he seems to suppose that there was a previous conversation held with them, or at least with some of them, but of this conversation he says nothing. St. Mark, if he finished his book himself, which is doubtful, gives, as we said above, beginning at xvi, 9, a very brief summary of the apparitions mentioned by the others. St. John himself ended his book at the second apparition of Jesus to the Apostles with Thomas present. Chapter xxi is, at it were, an appendix to his first production. In fact, he had left the way open for additions by saying (xx, 30) that Jesus had accomplished many other prodigies not set down in his book. But the most surprising of all is St. Luke who, while appearing (*Acts* i, 3, 4) to be well-informed concerning Jesus' apparitions, arranges his conclusion (xxiv, 44, *et seq.*) in such a way as to have one believe that the Ascension took place, not on the very day, unless it be in the evening, but shortly after the Resurrection. Not easily, in fact—for the words *αὐτούς* and *αὐτοῖς* seem to unite the two phrases very closely—can we introduce an interval of forty days between verses 43 and 44, or, if it be preferred, between 49 and 50. And yet this must be done, since, either the book of the *Acts* is not the work of St. Luke, or else the Evangelist knew that Jesus, after His Resurrection, remained forty days on earth, appearing to His disciples, conversing and eating with them. No doubt, one may say that, intending to sum up in the *Acts* the history of the period preceding the Ascension, he was satisfied merely to give the general meaning of the Master's final instructions to the Apostles and to end hurriedly with His final glorification. All this but states a fact, without explaining why he says nothing of the intervening sojourn of these Apostles in Galilee, nor why we are left to believe that they had not yet quitted Jerusalem when Jesus ascended into Heaven. And yet St. Luke is the Evangelist who

"Peace be to you; as the Father hath sent me, I also send you." [6] The Master's work being finished among men, that of the Apostles begins. At the close of His glorious labours, He charges them to take up His work, to develop it, to complete it. He had already many times promised them this sublime mission. He, in His new life, represents the Father Himself, and with His authority, as the Father had sent Him, He deems it His personal right to send in turn His representatives into the world. The latter shall have nothing to fear from their enemies. By the miracle of the Resurrection, their Master has sufficiently proved His omnipotence. But, He not only wishes them peace, He assures them of it, and none can deprive them of it. The world is open before them, and Jesus commands them to advance fearlessly like a valiant army announcing to the world the prodigy that has been accomplished. Indomitable firmness and courageous zeal shall be necessary. It belongs to the spirit of God to communicate to them these essentials.

At the same time Jesus breathed upon them and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain,

wrote with the intention of giving a continued and wisely ordered history of the Good-Tidings! We may judge by this of the omissions to be found in the others, omissions which, as in the present instance, gave them very little trouble. For, although they were able, if not to supply them with a single word, at least to point them out, it is evident that they took no pains to do so. Why did not the Son of God, Who came on earth to give Himself to us wholly and entirely, will to leave us a less incomplete history of His life? Was it perhaps in order that the Church might have the work of prolonging that life, by making Him survive, to more advantage than by means of books, in the development of His doctrine, and by the perpetual blossoming of His saints? We know no better answer to this serious question.

[6] St. John places the definitive mission of the Apostles and the communication of the Holy Ghost, at this first interview. Is this because, in his especial desire to close his Gospel with Thomas' act of faith he meant to group together in the account of the first apparition, the instructions given to the Apostles later on? Was the conferring of powers and gifts really gradual and successive? The suggestion is not an improbable one.

they are retained." We have here neither the simple promise of Pentecost nor Pentecost itself. Jesus provides the Apostles with the heavenly aid which they need in order to stand together, to sustain one another and to resist until the solemn moment when the Spirit shall come with His abundance of gifts. This present communication of the Spirit to the disciples is, at the Resurrection, what Pentecost shall be at the Ascension. As Jehovah had with a breath [7] given life to the first man, Jesus, Who also possesses the fulness of the Godhead, with a breath confers new life on the new creation; and as the breath of God had produced in Adam's soul the image of the Creator, so the breath of the Risen Son shall impress upon the souls of the Apostles the resemblance of the Redeemer and confer on them His own power.

For the Apostles shall have the right to remit or to retain sins. Jesus, during His public life, exercised this marvellous prerogative, and without it the establishment of the Kingdom of God would have been impossible; for, above all, judgment must be passed on the worthiness or unworthiness of those who seek admission to it. The new society has its goods, its honour, its proper life, and to share in them one must be accepted, and to be accepted one must be examined and judged. On this basis rests the Catholic doctrine of confession, and to every unbiassed mind its logic is irrefutable. For, how admit to a community of spiritual goods in the Church those who are not known? How may they be known without examination and without confession? Once the case is heard, the Apostle exercises the most august of powers in passing sentence; he confers life or death, he opens or closes the door, he embraces or he condemns.

The exercise of this power at once became necessary;

[7] *Gen.* ii, 7.

for, of the enemies of the Crucified, a certain number, touched with repentance, were soon to solicit the favour of being inscribed as proselytes of the Risen One. Who then was to grant them pardon? The King being no longer there, officially delegated judges seemed indispensable. Jesus deputed the Apostles for this sublime function.

Their mission has been perpetuated throughout the ages, and the Church absolves or condemns, not only in her general councils, but in those secret and private arraignments in which the priest, having listened to the revelations and regrets of a soul, declares that this soul is worthy or unworthy to participate in the holy mysteries; that it is pure or impure; that it is grafted upon Jesus Christ, or that it lives far from Him. Not only does he judge, but he heals and restores by the remission of sins. It is a strange phenomenon of the moral order that, beginning on the day on which the Master spoke thus, a whole race of men marked by God has publicly claimed this power to remit sin. The most incredulous cannot deny that these men have succeeded, in all times, in silencing the bitterest remorse in the souls of the greatest criminals, and in providing them true consolation as they breathed their last. Greater still, these same men have most frequently effected a reform in the moral life of those who came to speak to them their tearful avowals and to submit to them the lowly condition of their souls. Nor can they deny that, even from a purely philosophical point of view, sin finds in confession as practised in the Catholic church its most natural counterpoise. For, if it be a sin of pride, the humiliation expiates it; if it be rebellion, confession presents a mediator authorised by God; if it were an act of foolishness, confession applies a great lesson of wisdom. And for eighteen centuries we behold these judges, in no way resembling those of earth, carrying on with impenetrable secrecy, with

charity all fatherly, the most diverse and most singular trials, leaving it to the culprits alone to accuse themselves, accepting their deposition without questioning, and pronouncing over them with inexhaustible charity a sentence that, instead of blighting, reinstates, that gives life to him who rightfully should expect only death. Is not this a sign that the institution is divine, and that confession is the logical consequence of the power conferred on the Apostles of retaining or of remitting sin?

Jesus had, no doubt, uttered with some solemnity the sacramental words that supplied the Church with judges. His breath, falling upon the heads of His chosen ones, had just penetrated them with a new power. They were deeply moved, and the Master had already left them, though they seemed still to hear His voice and to receive His benediction.

They spent the remainder of the evening divided between joy caused by this newly received prerogative, and the weighty thoughts inspired by the henceforth incontestable fact of the Resurrection.

CHAPTER IV

THE OCTAVE OF THE RESURRECTION.—JESUS AGAIN APPEARS TO THE APOSTLES.

WHY ALL MUST BELIEVE BEFORE GOING BACK INTO GALILEE, AND WHY THOMAS DID NOT BELIEVE—THE CONDITIONS WHICH HE HAD REQUIRED FOR HIS ACT OF FAITH—HOW JESUS ACCEPTS AND FULFILS THEM—THE DISCIPLE CONFRONTED WITH THE MASTER'S WOUNDS—"MY LORD AND MY GOD"—WHAT KIND OF FAITH IS THE MOST MERITORIOUS? (St. John, xx, 24–29.)[1]

THE Apostles spent the entire Paschal week in Jerusalem. The Mosaic law obliged them to do this. They could have departed on the day after the Sabbath, that is on the octave or eighth day after the Resurrection. But it seems quite natural that they should have wished to celebrate so consoling a memory.

We find them, in fact, closely housed in their place of retreat, as on the day of the Resurrection. This is a proof that the Jews had not yet ceased to maintain towards them a threatening attitude. Jesus determined to bring their joy to its climax by appearing again in the midst of them.

[1] The end of *St. Mark* xvi, 14, sums up this apparition and the preceding one as follows: "At length He appeared to the Eleven as they were at table: and He upbraided them with their incredulity and hardness of heart because they did not believe them who had seen Him after He was risen again." The rest recalls St. Luke and his inaccurate perspective with reference to the Ascension.

Besides, there was still one lamb to be brought back to the fold; and of those whom the Father had confided to Him He meant that none should be suffered to perish except the wretched son of perdition. Among the Eleven there was one who, brave and good as he was, did not as yet share the faith of his brethren. But the Apostolic college could not return to Galilee to preach the great tidings to advantage unless as one united body with one heart, one soul, one faith.

At the time of Jesus' first apparition, Thomas Didymus (the Twin) was absent. The Evangelist does not say why. Had discouragement seized upon his melancholy soul? Had he separated from the others to give himself up wholly to sadness because of his disappointment? Did he wish to spare them the scandal of his unbelief? Was his absence simply the result of chance? On the evening of a day so full of important news, and at mealtime, this is hardly probable. However it may be, he must have found that solitude, at such decisive moments of the moral life, is seldom profitable to a troubled heart. When, moved by the constant reports of the apparition of Jesus, he determined to rejoin his colleagues, the latter told him with eager joy: "We have seen the Lord!" And, no doubt, they recounted the details of His visit, yet without awakening in the stolid sceptic the faith which henceforth they felt so lively in their own hearts. Thomas, in fact, merely accused them of being credulous, and, surrounding himself more than ever with objections and doubts: "Except I shall see," he said, "in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." The form of his reply and the threefold condition which he requires for his act of faith clearly show how resolute and how logical was his incredulity. He not only wished to see, as his col-

leagues claimed to have seen, but he demanded to touch the distinctive marks of the Crucified. We perceive that the horrible picture of Calvary had remained bright in the imagination of the disciple who was always loving, though unbelieving, and the more discouraged as he was the more loving.

A week had passed, and the joy of his companions, so happily convinced, had made no change in the sad state of his soul. But the conviction of the rest was in no way displeasing to him, and during this time he remained faithfully by them. Perhaps they were all together hoping that a new manifestation might be granted to celebrate the octave of that one which had so largely consoled them. Besides, it was the eve of their departure for Galilee: would the Master suffer the young and valiant army to return to the mountains without giving it His last word of instruction?

On the evening of the eighth day, in fact, and in the same room where they had eaten the Paschal meal—the dearest memories bound them to this glorious guest-chamber—while the doors were still shut, Jesus again presented Himself in the midst of His disciples, saying: "Peace be to you!" Great must have been Thomas' emotion, especially when the Master, taking him aside, said to him: "Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." This was the psychological moment when all should be lost or won, the point at which his soul should finally be guided towards faith or towards unbelief, and choose between life and death. Did Thomas recover his apostolic faith or prove himself a renegade? To mention thus one by one with such accuracy, the rashly formulated exactions of the disciple, was evidently enough for Him Who spoke to prove that He was Jesus. If with all

His gentleness He gave to His invitation a somewhat ironical tone, it was the more deeply to move the disciple's soul. At the same time He showed His hands with their terrible stigmata, exposed to view the wound in His side and seemed to await the decisive experiment which Thomas had demanded. The scene was particularly striking. The Apostle, disturbed at hearing so accurate a repetition of words which, however, he had not pronounced in the Master's presence, had risen. Surprised, transported, he approached the Risen One. A heavenly light flooded him with its rays, the evidence overwhelmed him, his conscience accused him. The sight of the truth, like the sight of God, puts man beyond himself. Thomas, as if in an ecstasy, falls on his knees, and oppressed by his emotion, cries out: "My Lord and My God!" Thus all at once did this troubled soul pass from the most obstinate unbelief to the most explicit faith. "I will not believe," he had said a week before. "Thou art my Lord and my God," he now exclaims. With these words he surpassed all the homage paid to Jesus during His mortal life, and proved that even among believers the last may suddenly become the first.

It were vain to try to transform into a vulgar exclamation a dogmatic assertion formulated with such energy. The Jew had no right to employ the name of God to express his surprise or his joy,[2] and besides, the Evangelist says in so many words that Thomas *was answering* Jesus,[3] when he said: "My Lord and my God!" The title God, therefore, is applied to Him as well as that of Lord, and to Him only can it be applied. Moreover, these words on Thomas' lips do not express more than his thought. Like every soul that reasons much before it believes, and believes strongly and for ever, when it has been convinced,

[2] *Exod.* xx, 7.
[3] *St. John* xx, 28: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ.

Thomas formulates his creed,[4] and he will stand bound by it even to the shedding of his blood; for we know that his life ended in martyrdom. His words and his thought, which seem to terminate [5] so happily a Gospel which begins with these words: "*And* the Word was God," were the first and fundamental dogma of the nascent Church. Not very long after, in fact, Pliny reports to Trajan that the Christians *sing hymns to the Christ as to a God.* In his enthusiasm, the Apostle had been especially logical. Comparing what he had formerly heard the Master say of His relations with the Father,[6] with what he now saw, he felt himself impelled to declare that the Master was God.

So instead of reproving this act of faith which enthusiasm seemed to transform into blasphemy, Our Lord approves it. He does not say to Thomas, as the angel of the Apocalypse says to John: "Adore God;" but, inasmuch as the acknowledgment that He is Lord and God is the essential condition of faith, He concludes: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed!" Jesus, therefore, distinguishes two kinds of faith: one which will not be given except after seeing and on one's own experience; the other which is given on the simple testimony the veracity of which has been established. He does not absolutely reject the first, and the example of Thomas proves that He

[4] The energy he puts into it is remarkable. He salutes the Master: "'Ο *κύριός μου!*" and then God: "*καὶ ὁ Θεός μου!*" Not only is the gradation significant, but the repetition of the article and of the word *μου* admirably emphasise the cry of the believing soul who holds the object of his faith and clings to it with energy.

[5] St. John, in fact, deems his book completed with this splendid profession of faith. He might have recounted many other prodigies, but they were not necessary for the end he had in view. He sought to establish the final conclusion that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, in order that this faith might give life to those who profess it (*St. John* xx, 30, 31). He has succeeded in doing so.

[6] *St. John* xiv, 9.

deigns at times to yield to its exactions even when they are most excessive. But such an instance can be only an exception, otherwise God would owe at least one miracle to every believer. The real faith that shall build up the Christian Church, the faith of the future, is that which will believe because others have seen, and which, relying on their sincere testimony, proclaims: "I believe, without having seen, that God has spoken." After this charitable lesson, the Master disappeared, and the Apostles now thought only of the happiness of seeing Him soon again in Galilee.

CHAPTER V

THE APPARITION OF JESUS ON THE SHORE OF LAKE TIBERIAS

The Apostles in Galilee—Fishing on the Lake—The Man on the Shore—"Cast the Net on the Right Side"—"It is the Lord"—Peter Walking on the Water—The Meal on the Strand—"Simon, Lovest Thou Me?"—Triple Expiation and Complete Reinstatement—"Feed My Lambs, Feed My Sheep"—Prophecy of Peter's Martyrdom—His Words Concerning St. John. (St. John xxi, 1–24.)[1]

Any delay in Jerusalem was fraught with danger to the Apostles. The hierarchic faction had kept close watch of them. They departed after the festival, and, following the Master's advice, returned into Galilee. The future was still a mystery to them, but they looked for important events.

Their first care was likely to spread on their way the

[1] The Gospel of St. John, as we have said, seemed to have ended with the second manifestation of Jesus to the Apostles, Thomas being present. In fact, the conclusion is categorical: "Many other signs also did Jesus in sight of His disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." The author shows therefore that his plan is carried out; he has not sought to be complete, and none can reproach him for his omissions; he is content with having proved, by a selection of narratives, the divine mission and sonship of Jesus, which was his chief object. How then are we to explain that a new chapter is added to a work which clearly is already finished? It can only be an appendix with some special object, whether that of correcting the false interpretation

great tidings of the resurrection of Jesus, in order to remove the bad impression caused by the news of His death. Eager to sustain one another and to lend greater strength to their testimony, they seem to have made Peter their spokesman. Capharnaum was their chosen headquarters. There they found suitable elements long since prepared for the founding of the new Christian society.

given to Jesus' words concerning John's immortality (v. 23), or that of establishing once for all the primacy of Peter. As a matter of fact, critics of all times have accepted this explanation. It is impossible to deny the authenticity of this fragment; every intrinsic and extrinsic argument is in its favour. For, setting aside the question of the last two verses, which may furnish a theme for special discussion, we find there once more not only the language of St. John (ἐφανέρωσεν ἑαυτὸν, compare with vii, 4, and xi, 33; the *sea of Tiberias*, which is found nowhere else but in *St. John* vi, 1; οἴδαμεν which occurs twice here, and is quite peculiar to the fourth Gospel; ἀνθρακιά, cf. v, xviii, 18; the twofold ἀμήν; *Nathanael* instead of *Bartholomew; the disciple whom Jesus loved*, etc.), but also his facile style, and his naïve vivacity. As for certain slight differences of style which may be discovered by the closest criticism, they are explained by the lateness of the date at which this supplement must have been written and added.

On the other hand, while possessing the character of an appendix added later on, this fragment was certainly inserted in the text of the very first edition of the fourth Gospel. There is not a single manuscript found without it. This is decisive, and one can only ask why St. John did not embody it in the text of his Gospel before the conclusion of chapter xx. To explain this anomaly, some have ventured the opinion that this passage, written on the report of the Apostle, had been afterwards attached to the end of his Gospel. They were really the words of St. John himself, but they were not meant to be included in his book. Whoever had consigned this graceful account to writing had joined it to the Gospel, not venturing to interpolate it into the text. From the beginning the Church recognised in it the language of St. John, preserved by a faithful secretary, and kept for it its place as a supplement or appendix, which some one had respectfully assigned it. As for the last two verses, an imitation of the conclusion of chapter xx, the twenty-fourth seems to be the personal work of the same scribe who has given us chapter xxi, and who in concert with the rest of the faithful about him is pleased to pay homage to the sincerity of John, the author of the Gospel: οἴδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθής ἐστιν ἡ μαρτυρία αὐτοῦ. The twenty-fifth, which is not found in the *Sinaiticus*, and the authenticity of which seems to many very uncertain, cannot in any case be more than a personal addition made by the one who, in the name of his brethren, wrote verse 24. He no longer speaks in the plural, οἴδαμεν, but in the singular, οἶμαι, and the hyperbolic form which he employs is absolutely different in tone from all that precedes. Some have thought that they recognised in this exaggerative phraseology certain characteristics of Papias; but we can find something analogous to this also in St. Ignatius and even in Hermas.

There they could devote themselves with profit to the work of the Apostolate. This accounts for the presence of the seven personages mentioned in the Gospel at the beginning of this narration: Simon Peter, Thomas the Twin, Nathanael of Cana of Galilee, the two sons of Zebedee,[2] and two other disciples.[3]

One evening, as if desirous of some diversion from their serious thoughts, and perhaps, too, to provide for their subsistence, Peter said to his friends: "I go a fishing"; the latter replied: "We also come with thee"; and they all embarked together. They found pleasure no doubt in recalling upon the blue waters of the lake the sweet memories of former days; there the Master had called them, had taught and loved them. But, while their souls were thus filled with tender emotions, their fishing, carried on in the midst of many distractions, was far from successful. The whole night passed, but they caught nothing.

Towards morning, a man appeared on the shore. Through the haze and the distance they discerned His outline only imperfectly. The disciples were far from suspecting that this was the Master. He said to them, "Children, have you any meat?" They answered Him: "No." They imagined Him to be a wayfarer hard pressed with hunger and in quest of food. "Cast the net on the right side of the ship," said the mysterious speaker, "and you shall find." They obeyed at once, and caught so great a quantity of fish that they drew

[2] The sons of Zebedee being named here the last, and out of the place they ordinarily occupy in the list of Apostles, we may see in this a proof that John himself is the author of this account. He modestly gives himself the last place and a general designation: *the sons of Zebedee.*

[3] The question has been asked, Who were these two disciples whose names are not mentioned? Was one of them the man for whose sake the pleasant incident seems to have been recorded? Some one has suggested Aristion and John the Presbyter, mentioned by Papias as "disciples of the Lord." But it is rash to assign names where none are given, and to place in Galilee Ephesians who in all probability were never there.

in their nets only with great difficulty. The right hand has always been, according to Scripture, in the Old as well as in the New Testament, the better side. Benjamin, the son of the right hand, is the beloved of his father and the best beloved of Jehovah.[4] The sheep, or the elect, are at the right hand of the Sovereign Judge, while the goats, or the wicked, pass to His left. However, the real cause of this prodigious catch was not altogether the direction given to the net, but the information furnished by their questioner and accepted by the Apostles. Let them at any time cast their net in obedience to the Master's word, the time of these fishers of men shall never be wasted.

The disciples looked with astonishment on the man who had given them such opportune advice, yet none of them seemed to recognise Him. John, with his eagle eye, or rather with the glance of a heart whose keenness penetrates the mist and overleaps the distance, was the first to understand this happy incident. "It is the Lord!" said he. At these words, Peter took up his coat, and putting it on (for he was naked[5]) rushed out into the water the sooner to reach Him. The others, dragging their nets full of fish in tow after the boat, reached shore more slowly. They were two hundred cubits from the shore.

[4] *Gen.* xliv, 22; *Deut.* xxxiii, 12.

[5] It is true that sometimes the word γυμνός may be said of a man who has on nothing but a tunic; in this sense the Greeks were accustomed to say γυμνὸν ἐν τῷ χιτωνίσκῳ. This, however, is not its usual meaning. In *St. Mark* xiv, 52, it means a person who is absolutely naked. What is to be understood from this text is that St. Peter was not in condition to appear with decency in Jesus' presence. That is why he covers himself with a garment, which, however, is far from helping him more quickly to reach the shore. To-day the fishermen on the lake enter the water wholly naked, except the Christians who, for decency's sake, wear a light apron which does not impede their movements. To make distinctions between χιτών, ἐπενδύτης and ἱμάτιον, when fishermen are in question, is to attribute to these poor creatures a luxuriousness in the matter of apparel of which they have no idea. The best attired among them wear a wide tunic shaped like a blouse.

The character and the future rôle of the two disciples in the Church seem here to be happily indicated. John will be the contemplative and the seer; Peter the man of energy and action. Without asking the Master this time to bid him walk upon the water, he rushes forth to Him Whom John has recognised. He swims, he runs, and finally he reaches His side. This enthusiastic activity has become the distinctive characteristic of the successors of Peter. Instinctively as much as by their providential mission, they are always the first to defend the truth, to discover error, to proclaim the good tidings. They hasten towards Jesus and towards His light, guided by their enthusiasm and their ardour, while others with their books, their eloquence, their patient labours arrive at His side only after long waiting. As a rule, in the struggle against heresy Peter leads the way, the others follow.

Once landed, the Apostles found bread, a brazier already lighted, and a partly broiled fish. How had this come about? The Evangelist is not concerned about this, any more than he was about the manner of our Lord's entrance into the guest-chamber while the doors were closed. For him Jesus is the Lord; there is no need, therefore, to be occupied with the how of things when He is in question. If, during His mortal life, He changed water into wine, if He multiplied loaves and fishes, could He not, in His transfigured life, provide even more easily by His creative power whatever might contribute to the moral formation of His disciples? In this instance, He desires to preside over another miraculous meal, for it is with this bread and this fish that He intends to feed the seven fishermen. It has not been sufficiently remarked that there is nothing whatsoever to indicate that the fish thus miraculously caught was then cooked, nor that the Apostles ate of it. It is true that Jesus gave the order: "Bring hither, of

the fishes which you have now caught!" but He did so in order to have them make an inventory of them, as it were, as they threw them out upon the shore, and to have them ascertain the prodigious size of the capture they had made. Peter at once went into the boat and drew out of the water the net filled with one hundred and fifty-three fishes. It is a detail worthy of notice that notwithstanding the great weight, the net was not in the least broken. It has been thought that these one hundred and fifty-three fishes, representing all the various species in the lake,[6] were a figure of the many souls whom the Apostles, with the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, should later on capture in the world and lead triumphantly to the Master's feet.

Up to this moment the other disciples, out of respect, had remained at a distance. The miraculous haul having been verified, Jesus called to them: "Come and dine." They approached, but with some timidity, not even venturing, as the Evangelist says, to ask Him Who He was, and thus to engage Him in conversation. In reality, they saw that He was the Risen Jesus, but it may be that they discerned in His looks something mysterious, something extraordinary, heavenly, that forbade them to think of resuming the familiar relations of former days. He, drawing near to them, took the bread and the fish, and began to distribute them. It happened that, by an act of His almighty power, there was enough to satisfy all. As in the beautiful days of His Galilean ministry, they were all together on the shore of the lake, assembled about a

[6] St. Jerome, in *Ezech.* xlvii, 9, claims that the ancients knew only one hundred and fifty-three kinds of fish. He quotes Oppian, a Cilician poet, contemporary of Marcus Aurelius. But it is more probable, notwithstanding all the symbolical dissertations on this number, that it signifies merely a great quantity. It is given here only because Peter, being a fisherman by profession, was determined to know the number of such a fine catch; John, a fisherman, too, takes a special interest in reporting this good luck.

miraculous and fraternal repast. The Master, the true head of the family, presided. We know nothing of the pious discourses which constituted its charm. It may be that silence was the most eloquent expression of their happiness. There is nothing to keep us from believing that, if Jesus said but few words, He gave Himself whole and entire under the figure of the bread as at the Last Supper. *Piscis assus, Christus est passus!* says St. Augustine. In this case, the banquet prepared on the shore was not only a symbol, but above all a foretaste of that of heaven, in which the Son of God, giving Himself to souls as their reward, becomes at once their nourishment and their everlasting reward.[7]

The twofold miracle which had just taken place was only the preliminary of a more important scene which of itself was quite sufficient to justify a supplementary chapter in the Gospel of St. John.

The meal was over. Ever since his fall, and notwithstanding his repentance, Simon, although he had not lost the first place among his brethren—a sin of weakness does not abrogate the dignity conferred on a man by the hand of God, and Jesus had honoured the chief of the Apostles with a special manifestation—Simon was, however, still sad and humiliated. His fault seemed to him the more unpardonable as his primacy was the more unchallenged. It seemed best to Jesus that his humiliation should now come to an end. The opportunity appeared to be well suited for a public reinstatement. The boat which lay there upon the lake and the miraculous draught of

[7] As if he desired once more to correct the Synoptics, the fourth Evangelist observes that this manifestation of Jesus to the Apostles, who were nearly all present, was the third. He even says: ἤδη τρίτον, "*now* (or already) *the third time*," to indicate that there had been other manifestations. This therefore ought to be considered anterior to all those manifestations which occurred in Galilee, regardless of the various appearances to individuals, such as Mary Magdalen, Peter, the disciples at Emmaus, and James.

fishes just taken reminded Simon of the blessed day on which the mercy of the Master had chosen him as a disciple, and destined him later to become an apostle; that had been the fairest day in all his life. At the same time the smoking brazier at his side may have reminded him of the fire before which, in the court-yard of the high-priest, on that awful night, he had, like a coward, thrice denied Him Who had chosen him; that night was the dark spot in his career. Jesus in His mercy determined to remove this fearful memory in the presence of them all. A threefold protestation of love could well outweigh a threefold denial. "Simon, son of John," He said to him, and by this name He led him back once more to the time when he was not yet Peter, "lovest thou Me more than these?" The question, put in these terms, plainly alluded to Peter's saying: "Although all shall be scandalised in Thee, I will never be scandalised," and recalled his presumptuous protestations before his fall. With profound humility Simon replied "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." He no longer seeks any comparison with his brethren; he sets aside even the primacy suggested by Jesus. Besides, the Master, in His question, has employed a word that signifies profound love, and Peter, in his response, changes it to another which means only an affectionate attachment.[8] His humility henceforth keeps him in fear of saying too much and of producing works that may fall below the level of his protestations. With all this precaution in his language, he simply appeals to the appreciation of Him Who alone can read in the depths of the soul. Then the Master, with kindly authority, said to him: "Feed my lambs."[9] No doubt, He Himself shall always be the true

[8] This is the difference between ἀγαπᾶν used by Jesus and φιλεῖν used by the disciple.

[9] The word ἀρνία instead of ἄρνας shows the Shepherd's tender love of the youngest, the most inexperienced, and the most interesting portion of the flock.

Shepherd; for the lambs are still His; they are His inalienable flock: "*Oves meas*," observes St. Augustine with justice, "*sicut meas pasce, non sicut tuas.*" But since He is not to remain visibly with His flock, He naturally selects His chief and essential representative, through whom as intermediary He shall give to the feeble young lambs the most attentive and devoted care. To feed, that is, to nourish with the bread of truth,[10] to distribute substantial life shall be the foremost duty of Peter, and, after him, of all the shepherds.

There was a moment's silence, and again Jesus spoke, with greater solemnity: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" This time He makes no comparison, since Peter evidently wishes none; but the suppression of comparison does not lessen the purport of the question. It is not whether Peter loves more than the others, which perhaps would not be saying enough, but, absolutely speaking, whether or not he loves. Surprised, no doubt, at this insistence, the disciple replies with the same humility as before: "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And Jesus says: "Feed my lambs." [11] These latter must be not only nourished, but also guided, for they do not remain stationary in the fold.

Finally a third time, by way of contrast with the third denial, Jesus said: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?" Peter was grieved, either because the allusion to his threefold denial became more evident, or because he thought his Master doubted his love.[12] Summoning all his energy, yet

[10] The first time Jesus employs the verb βόσκω, which means *have them fed*; the second time He uses the verb ποιμαίνω, which signifies the general control of the flock, and the third time He recurs to the expression used at first.

[11] The word προβατία, which is the true reading, signifies an intermediate degree, in the flock, between the lambs and the ewes, πρόβατα. Here once more is this special class designated by a diminutive full of tender meaning.

[12] It would appear so, since in His third question, Jesus had used Peter's own word φιλεῖν, instead of ἀγαπᾶν, which He had employed up

losing none of the touching reserve which had dictated his former replies, he says: "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." "Feed my sheep," added the Master. Thus, once again, He proclaimed the primacy of Peter in charging him to feed even the ewes of the flock. Nothing, therefore, must be allowed to escape the vigilance of the shepherd who is delegated; and all, without exception, shall be brought into subjection beneath his staff. Here we find the definitive consecration of the promises of former days, the fulfilment of which the Apostle, by his fall, seemed to have postponed. The keys of the Kingdom are conferred on him as on the master of the house, the first and supreme pastor. Now that he is converted, it is his duty to confirm his brethren. He must do this with patience and with kindness. When one has fallen himself, it costs him less to be indulgent towards the weaknesses of others. If Jesus preserves him his mission, in spite of his sin, and, perhaps, because of his sin—for which he had atoned—it is because He sees that he is henceforth more capable than the others of clemency towards men and of zeal for the glory of God. Three times has Peter affirmed that he loved the Master, because the more elevated his dignity, the more sublime must be his charity. He is bound to love threefold more than the faithful, and twofold more than his brethren. Vigilance, abnegation, and devotion shall be the proof of this love.

But the Master has not yet done speaking to him the last words of His testament. For Simon is to be His successor not only in the government of the flock, but also in the harder and not less glorious way of sacrifice. He shall advance through the apostolate to martyrdom, as the Master has done. This, according to John the Evange-

to that point, and He seemed to ask if, even on that level, his love was real.

list [13] (and exegetes need seek no other meaning) is what is expressed in the following words of the Saviour: "Amen, amen, I say to thee: when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself and didst walk where thou wouldst. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldst not." Jesus, therefore, distinguishes two phases in Peter's life, one in which he has freely disposed of himself, as a young man who preserves his full independence so long as he remains single; the other when, in accepting the serious life of the head of the family, he has lost his liberty. For a man's independence is always in inverse ratio to the authority he receives or assumes in the domestic circle. This latter phase, which ordinarily marks mature age, makes an entire change in his existence. Thus it is that by reason of his primacy, Peter shall be the slave of his new obligations. God will take care so to bind him, that he shall be unable to loose himself, and, drawn on from sacrifice to sacrifice, in order to insure the prosperity of the flock, he shall go on even to the laying down of his own life.

Such is the general meaning of this prophecy. Moreover, in the imagery employed we must discern an indication of the martyrdom reserved for the chief of the Apostles. Ordinarily the prophetic style follows a double parallel sense, both equally true, and we cannot but recognise in the aged man who stretches his arms before the one who binds him, Simon Peter, the venerable head of the Christian family, suffering himself to be chained at the close of his laborious apostolate. Following his Master's example, he will advance bravely to the horrible agony of the cross,[14] and placing his trembling hands upon the re-

[13] *St. John* xxi, 19.

[14] Antiquity bears witness that St. Peter suffered at the same time as St. Paul, and consequently during the persecution under Nero. All testimony agrees that he was crucified. Cf. Tertullian, *Scorv.*, 15; *Præscr.*, 35;

doubtable tree, he shall seek there the palm of a glorious martyrdom.[15]

On finishing His prophecy, Jesus, as if He had some secret advice to give him, invited Peter to follow Him. Peter followed. But John, already ashamed of having remained in the boat and of not having imitated the eagerness of his friend, would not let Jesus depart without accompanying Him for at least a moment. He indicates, moreover, the reasons that seemed to justify his temerity. Was he not the disciple whom Jesus loved? Could he believe that the Master would keep secret from him that which He was to confide to Peter? Was it not to him that the Lord, at the Last Supper, had confided the name of the traitor? After having served as intermediary for Peter and as confidant for Jesus on so grave an occasion, how could he now be a hindrance to their conversation? John therefore approached them. Besides, for some time past, he was unable to separate himself from the son of Jona. "Lord, and what shall this man do?" asked Simon, who, on hearing his friend's footstep, wished either to introduce him into the conversation, or to obtain at least a kind word for him.[16] "So I will have him to remain till I come, what is it to thee?" said Jesus; "follow thou Me." This reply,

Eusebius, *H. E.*, ii, 25. Origen, in *Eusebius* ii, 25, and iii, 1, relates that he begged to be crucified head downwards, a request that accords well with the ardent nature and the profound humility of the converted Peter.

[15] The Evangelist, observing that these words foretold the death of Peter, indicates thus that his Gospel was published after the martyrdom of the head of the Apostles, that is, after the year 64 A.D. If we grant that the details of this prophecy have any real value, we may find here a true picture of the crucifixion: Peter, at the close of his career, ὅταν δὲ γεράσῃς, shall extend his arms or his hands ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖράς σου, to let some one else gird his loins ἄλλος σε ζώσει, and shall raise him up thus bound οἴσει, carrying him whither nature would refuse to go, ὅπου οὐ θέλεις. Jesus, recently crucified and speaking in this manner, would seem to indicate that crucifixion was usually effected with the aid of cords.

[16] It seems illogical to seek in Peter's question for anything more than a feeling of tender affection for John. The chief of the Apostles has always loved the disciple for whom the Master Himself had a special affection. He

the purpose of which was to leave John out of the discussion by gently reprimanding Peter for his indiscreet affection, seemed like a prophecy to those who heard it. They thought that Jesus, having announced the violent death of the latter, had also in veiled terms proclaimed the immortality of the former.[17] This was an error, as the Evangelist observes, for the Master had by no means said that John was not to die; and if there were in His reply any meaning other than the natural meaning of the words, if the verb *remain* signified not only to remain with the apostolic group, instead of following Peter quite inopportunely, but to remain in this life, we would have to conclude that the death of the martyr and that of the just man differ one from the other in this that the martyr is considered as going to Jesus of his own accord, in a flight of generosity, while Jesus comes to take the just man dying of old age to introduce him into heaven.[18] The extraordinary longevity of John had given rise to the belief that he would live until the coming of the Son of Man, and this was an absurd rumour which he felt himself obliged to dispel.

With these words Jesus withdrew with Peter. It is sup-

always lived with him, and shall he now be separated from him in his martyrdom, the supreme glory here foretold of him?

[17] This was the antithesis: *Follow thou Me, he is to remain*, that justified apparently the sense given to the words concerning St. John: *Follow thou Me to death . . . ! but do thou remain in life !*

[18] This is perhaps the best explanation of a somewhat embarrassing text. Some have admitted that, in speaking of His coming, Jesus simply had in mind the *Parousia*, and in this manner supported the belief that it would come during the life of the present generation, according to *St. Matthew* xvi, 28. Cf. x, 23, and xxvi, 64. But in this case it is difficult to see how the prophecy was fulfilled. With what event are we to make this coming of Jesus Christ coincide? With the destruction of Jerusalem? John lived for a long time after this, and it is hardly reasonable to say that this coming continued until the death of the Apostle, that is, from the year 70 to the end of the first century. Others have thought that Jesus was alluding to the Apocalyptic manifestation which He was reserving for John, before calling him to Himself. But is this a *Parousia*?

posed that on this occasion He gave him some personal instructions to guide him in the foundation and government of the Church. It may be that He appointed with Him the place and the day when all the Apostles should receive His official visit, a visit which He had promised,[19] and which was particularly important because of the prescriptions which He desired to give to those who should then be gathered to see Him and to do Him homage.

[19] This would agree with the meeting-place referred to in *St. Matt.* xxviii, 16: *εἰς τὸ ὄρος οὗ ἐτάξατο. . . .*

CHAPTER VI

OTHER APPEARANCES OF JESUS

THE CHRISTOPHANIES IN ST. PAUL AND THEIR MEANING —THE APPARITION TO THE FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN —TO JAMES—TO THE ELEVEN—THE MOUNTAIN IN GALILEE—THE GOD WHO OPENS THE WORLD BEFORE THE AMBITION OF HIS SOLDIERS.—*TEACH* AND *BAPTISE* IN THE NAME OF THE TRINITY—"*I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS.*" (St. Matthew xxviii, 16–20; St. Mark xvi, 15–18.)

IN recounting the appearance of Jesus on the shores of the Lake, the fourth Evangelist remarks that this was *now* the third with which the Apostolic group had been favoured. He thus indicates that there were others, and this is confirmed by St. Luke, who, in the very beginning of the Book of the Acts, declares that the manifestations of the Risen Jesus continued for forty days. St. Paul writing to the Corinthians mentions several of those, no doubt, which he thought would make the deepest impression upon them. Thus he says nothing concerning the apparition to Magdalen and her companions. A woman's testimony had but little value among the Greeks and Romans. On the other hand, the apparitions to Peter and to James, of which we have no detailed knowledge, seem to him to be important, in view of the fame and consideration which these two Apostles enjoyed. But there is one particularly decisive apparition concerning which unfortu-

nately he gives no further details. It took place in the presence of five hundred of the faithful assembled together. Many of these were still living at the time he wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians, so that it would seem as if he were appealing to their authentic testimony.

If Paul (and this seems to follow from the very form he uses [1]), desired to observe the chronological order, we may suppose that this manifestation took place after the Resurrection when the faithful were on the point of leaving Jerusalem after the Feast of the Passover. The magnitude of the number, five hundred, would be easy to explain because of the custom of grouping in caravans at the time when all were setting out for home. The difficulty arising from the fact that the fourth Gospel classes the apparition on the shore of the lake as the third, is not insurmountable, if we consider that in St. John there is question exclusively of the apparitions to the Apostolic group, and that the Apostles having passed the whole week, at least up to the second Sunday, in Jerusalem, may not have been present with the five hundred pilgrims who were setting out from the Holy City. And yet, since St. Paul says nothing definite either of the place or of the date of this very important manifestation, it is not impossible to locate it, if desirable, in Galilee and after the apparition on the shore of the lake; but, in that case, we must suppose that there was a previous and insistent summons in order to assemble the considerable number of five hundred witnesses.

In any case, this Christophany cannot by any means be identified with that one which is recounted in St. Matthew,

[1] The order in which he enumerates (*I Cor.* xv, 5, *et seq.*) the various Christophanies seems altogether chronological. The words ειτα, *after that*, επειτα, *then*, the bearing of which may be seen in v. 23, 24, and 26, lead up to the final apparition, εσχατον, that, namely, with which he was favoured himself.

and which took place on a mountain in Galilee. St. Paul, in fact, expressly distinguishes it from those which occurred before and after in the presence of the Apostolic group. To his mind, it is an apparition granted to the *brethren*, that is, to the members who were troubled, perplexed, and deserved to be encouraged, and who constituted the nucleus of the nascent Church. But in St. Matthew there is question of a meeting-place assigned for the Eleven only, a meeting-place, in fact, where Jesus appears in order to confer powers and a mission intended for them alone.

It would seem even that the closing passage of the first Gospel was written rather as a hasty, hurried, and, as it were, comprehensive summary of the various apparitions to the Apostles, than as an accurate account of any single one. For, after all, how are we to understand that, after the foregoing manifestations [not reported, it is true, by him, but certainly to be admitted, since they are attested by the others] at one of the latest that occurred in Galilee, some of the Eleven—the Eleven alone are concerned in this—still doubted the reality of the Resurrection? But it was only at the beginning that any doubt existed among the Apostles and, in particular, in the mind of Thomas. As a general thing, the Synoptic tradition had preserved the memory of this reprehensible attitude on the part of some of the Apostles, and very probably St. Matthew meant to report this in the only Christophany of which he gives an account and which he locates in Galilee. According to this hypothesis, his accuracy is only general; but, judging from the manner in which he hurries and summarises the closing incidents of the Gospel history, he does not seem to have intended to preserve it any more strictly. We must accept him just as he is. St. Paul is briefer still than he; he speaks as one

who has a thesis to prove; and he cites in a summary manner the facts which prove it. However, we think that the order he has observed in his account of the apparitions should be taken literally and that it should accordingly command our belief.

Thus, after the apparition to the five hundred brethren we ought to place the manifestation to James. With regard to this apparition, we possess no more authentic details than we do in the case of that to Peter. It is probable that Paul, on his various journeys to Jerusalem, had heard the history of these two manifestations from the very lips of the two men who had been favoured. The appearance to Peter is merely mentioned in the Gospel of St. Luke. The one to James was recounted more at length in the Gospel of the Hebrews, but with certain details which were plainly legendary.

If we may believe the fragment of this book which was reproduced by St. Jerome,[2] James the Just had made a vow not to eat bread (for the Orientals this was equivalent to abstaining from all food) from the moment when he had drunk from the Lord's chalice, until he should see the same Lord risen from the dead. But hardly had Jesus stepped forth from the sepulchre, when, handing His shroud to the servant of the High-Priest, He went to show Himself to James, and taking bread, He blessed it and broke and offered it to James the Just, saying: "Brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead." This James the Just is certainly the same James who, according to Hegesippus[3] was surnamed Oblias, the *Bul-*

[2] *De Vir. Ill.*, ii.

[3] Hegesippus, quoted in Eusebius, *H. E.*, ii, 23. Cf. Epiphan., *Hær.*, lxxviii, 7, 13–14, and the Pseudo-Abdias, *Hist. Apost.*, vi, 5. In Eusebius, *H. E.*, ii, 1, Clement of Alexandria supposes that Jesus taught His esoteric doctrine, τὴν γνῶσιν, to James the Just, Peter and John, after His Resurrection. These afterwards instructed the other Apostles and disciples.

wark of the People, and concerning whom strange things were told in the way of ascetical and Nazarite practices. Even if the detail reported by the Gospel of the Hebrews about Jesus handing His shroud to the servant of the High-Priest should not betray its apocryphal origin, we should still be justified in expressing our astonishment that, at a time when all the Apostles seemed so uncertain in their faith, one of them, whose part had till then been obscure, should have made a vow not to eat until he had seen his Risen Master. His attitude would have been singularly at variance with the attitude of the others. Morally speaking this is so impossible that it renders the whole story suspicious. The little truth it does contain, because it is borrowed from Apostolic tradition, is that Jesus really appeared to James, His cousin, and the future pastor of the Church of Jerusalem. As for the oath being a reason for an apparition which, chronologically, ought to be placed before all the others, since Jesus took only just time enough to throw aside His shroud into the hands of a witness of His Resurrection, and hastened to James who had been fasting for two days and a half, this cannot be anything more than a legend of the Judeo-Christian Church seeking to establish that the rôle of its chief was particularly honourable and distinguished.

The apparitions mentioned by St. Paul, after the one accorded to James, are designated in general terms: "by all the Apostles." [4] They were certainly numerous and frequent, according to the author of the Book of the Acts. What purpose could Jesus have had in view during the forty days which He passed, so to speak, between heaven and earth, other than to strengthen patiently and in every

[4] *I Cor.* xv, 7: εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν.

possible way [5] the faith of His followers? It may be that some trace of this influence on them is to be seen in the words of St. Luke: "He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." [6]

In any case, as we have already said, we must include in the number of these final appearances *to all the Apostles* not only that of the Ascension, but also that one which, according to St. Matthew, took place on a mountain in Galilee. From its recommendations it belongs evidently to the period in which Our Lord spoke His last words of farewell.

The meeting-place in Galilee had been appointed by Jesus on the eve of His Passion, and, since then, repeated to the Apostles through the medium of the holy women. St. Matthew seems to be occupied solely with the thought of showing, as a summary proof of the Resurrection, that they had been faithful to their appointment, and he tells in quite simple terms of the apparition of Jesus on a mountain in Galilee, whereas St. Luke, assuming a very different attitude, speaks only of the appearances in Jerusalem, unaware apparently of the others.[7] Joining hands with both, so to speak, St. John seems bent on supplying the

[5] *Acts* i, 3: ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις.

[6] *St. Matt.* xxvi, 32; xxviii, 10; *St. Mark* xiv, 28; and xvi, 7.

[7] All are agreed that this difficulty in St. Luke is to be solved by granting that there is at least one omission in the passage 43–49, if it be only that which would allow the Apostles to go into Galilee. The abbreviated form which his account then takes on, justifies us in granting even more than one. Thus we may pause at v. 44, in the account of the apparition to the Apostles, and see in v. 44 and 45, a general hint of the instructions given by Jesus during His various apparitions in Galilee or elsewhere. With v. 46 would begin the final discourse in Jerusalem before the Ascension. This dissection may seem strange, but it is necessary, since it is certain that the Apostles went into Galilee, after the Paschal week and spent some time there. Whether St. Luke, who faithfully reported the data which he had at hand, perceived these omissions or not, matters little. In view of the accounts of the other Evangelists, they must be admitted in order to explain what would otherwise be inexplicable. Without them, it would seem not only that the Apostles did not quit Jerusalem between the Resurrection and the Ascension, but also that Jesus had formally forbidden them to do so, v. 49.

omissions of the one and the other. He shows, in fact, how the Apostles, instead of remaining in Jerusalem until Pentecost, spent some time in Galilee, receiving there the consoling visits of the Lord, just as they had before received them in Jerusalem. Moreover, he enables us to perceive, in the gracious scene described on the borders of the lake, how the old life in Galilee with its charming familiarity was for a spell renewed. At times it was on the shores where He had so frequently landed, again, it was on the mountain where He had preached with such merciful love, that the Master made Himself known to His own.

Eminences are particularly favourable to the manifestations of the supernatural order. There one finds silence and shelter from the eyes of the vulgar, and stands, as it were, on a spot nearer heaven. It was on a mountain that Jesus had chosen His Apostles, there, for the last time, He now determined to delegate to them His power. The precise spot where this holy meeting took place is unknown.

As soon as the Master appeared, they all fell prostrate in adoration.[8] Then advancing with majesty towards them, Jesus justified the religious feelings by which they were animated. "All power," He said, "is given to Me in heaven and on earth." He probably accentuated this solemn declaration—here a part of the text of St. Luke[9] would find a place—in order that they might see how He had won that supreme authority by His sufferings and His death. Thus, as far as they were concerned, He removed

[8] We can find no serious difficulty in the remark of St. Matt. xxviii, 17: "but some doubted," *οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν*. If this is not an error in the text, and if we are not to read *οὐδέ* instead of *οἱ δὲ*, or *διέστασαν*, *withdrew*, instead of *ἐδίστασαν*, *doubted*, this reflection refers to the hesitation that marked the first apparitions in Jerusalem. These are here predicated of the last, which for St. Matthew is the first and last. The Evangelist, in his account, however brief it may be, does not wish to disguise in the slightest degree the various sentiments awakened in the Apostles by the sight of the Risen Jesus.

[9] *St. Luke* xxiv, 45.

the scandal of His Cross, by proving that His Passion, foretold by the Prophets, had been the necessary way by which He should enter into glory. Patiently, He continued to disclose horizons quite new to minds always filled with Jewish prejudices. It was in the Sacred Books that He wished them to seek and find the true physiognomy of the Messiah-King, as well as the conditions of His universal reign.

Besides, He assured them that the future would prove the reality of His almighty power in heaven and on earth. From heaven, where he was going to prepare a place for His servants, He would send the Holy Spirit into the world to mark, to sanctify, and to assemble the members of His Kingdom. On earth, He would achieve the conquest of the nations, arouse the indifferent, convert sinners, found, preserve, spread the Church, and, at the end of the world, judge all mankind whose Saviour and King He was. This absolute power, in time and in eternity was thus the reward of His life and of His death. He did not adjudge it to Himself, He attained it by conquest, and the Father has given it to Him in its plenitude.

From that moment, Master of the world, He sends His messengers to take possession of it. "Going, therefore," He said to His Apostles, "teach ye all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." With this, Jewish exclusivism had come to an end. The true God ceasing to belong to a single people, desires to be the God of all nations. Moses had inclosed in the Ark the Tables of the Law, and Israel had jealously guarded them there, screened, as it were, from the rest of mankind. Jesus, having written His laws in the hearts of His disciples, desires that the whole world may see them and hear them promulgated. The command is clear: "Go." Activity shall be the native virtue of the

Christian Church. She shall never be suffered to remain idly in contemplation. Militant she must be; she must advance, she must instruct and make proselytes. She must possess herself of souls and bodies, introducing Jesus Christ into the former by the preaching of the Gospel, and impressing upon the latter, by baptism, the distinctive mark of the Christian.

Teach all nations! Even the most savage peoples are, therefore, called to enter into the new Kingdom, and every creature, in St. Mark's [10] words, has a right to expect the Good Tidings. The Master wishes to make the whole world His disciple.[11] The work to be done is great; but the Apostles shall be sustained by the power of Him Who sends them.

It is a fact that, from the beginning, the Church has not ceased for a single day to labour in spreading the Gospel and in converting the heathen. Her apostles travel over all the roads of the world, over the waves of the ocean, through the midst of forests, beneath the burning sun of the tropics, into the icy confines of the poles, preaching, baptising, and making Christians.

The Gospel and baptism are given as the sole means of conquest; the one shall be the consecration of the other. The Gospel is the word, baptism is the mark of Jesus Christ. A ceremony in use among the Jews for the admission of pagans to the law of Moses, the latter was, as we have seen, especially employed by St. John as the symbol of penance and as an immediate preparation for the coming of the Messiah. The disciples of Jesus had themselves practised it for a time on those who desired to follow the

[10] In *St. Mark* xvi, 15, Jesus, in saying: πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει, indicates that not only man, but all creation in His service shall share in the light and consolation through the preaching of the Gospel.

[11] This is the meaning of the word: μαθητεύσατε in this passage of *St. Matt.* xxviii, 19; cf. xxvii, 57; xiii, 51, and *Acts* xiv, 21.

Master.[12] Jesus now promulgates it as the law to which all must submit who wish to enter the Society of the Elect. It is to be the obligatory sign of enrolment in the army of Christ. But, like every sacrament, an efficacious sign, it shall first produce in the soul the sanctity it signifies. Thus the new-made soldier shall be purified, rehabilitated, glorified, before being enrolled.

The three Divine Persons will preside at his spiritual birth, and it is Their Name which, solemnly invoked, gives to the baptismal water the power of reaching the soul and cleansing it of its stains. There is no other text in the Gospel where Jesus names simultaneously the three Divine Persons. He supplies here, in putting them on a footing of perfect equality, a decisive argument in favour of the important dogma of the Holy Trinity. At His own baptism in the Jordan we have seen God reveal Himself as the Father Who spoke, as the Son Who was baptised, as the Spirit Who descended from heaven. At the baptism of every believer, an explicit profession of faith shall bind the new-made Christian not only to the Name, but to the vital essence of the Three Divine Persons. He shall have entered into a sacred contract with Them.

No one is ignorant of the fact that the Church has always looked upon the Saviour's words as the necessary form in the regular administration of baptism. St. Justin tells us this in explicit terms.[13] Those passages of the Acts or of the Epistles that speak of baptism in the name of Jesus, are only an abridged form signifying the Christian baptism in contrast with the baptism of the Jews. As a matter of fact, whenever there is question of

[12] *St. John* iv, 2.

[13] Apol. i, 61–79. He says that those who desired to profess the doctrine of Jesus Christ were baptised: ἐπ' ὀνόματος τοῦ Πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων καὶ δεσπότου Θεοῦ, καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ Πνεύματος ἁγίου.

the official administration of baptism, it is in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that it is conferred.

When the whole Trinity shall have taken possession of the baptised soul, the latter shall owe the Trinity a life-long homage, to be shown by faith in the dogmas of the Gospel and by the practice of the Christian law. "Teaching them," said Jesus, "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." The promulgation of the Gospel, therefore, imposes on mankind the obligation of submitting to, and of accepting the truth. None can with impunity reject the Good Tidings. When an Apostle shall have passed from any spot, he shall leave after him either life or death. Those who believe shall be saved, the unbeliever shall be condemned. After mercy comes the judgment; He Whom men shall not have accepted as their Saviour will stand forth irresistibly as their judge.

"And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover." [14] The omnipotence of Jesus shall be given therefore into His disciples' hands, and they shall exercise it in the most diverse ways, in the world of spirits as well as in the world of matter. There is no fear that it shall ever fail them.

[14] These privileges accorded to the true believers, are read at the end of *St. Mark* xvi, 15–18. The Apostolic generation saw their fulfilment: the power of driving out devils, as the Apostles had received it; the gift of tongues, *Acts* ii, 4; x, 46; xix, 6; the killing of serpents, *Acts* xviii, 2; the power of drinking poison with impunity, as Barsabas did, according to Papias in Eusebius, *H. E.*, iii, 39; like St. John in Abdias, *Hist. Apost.* v. 20, and the *Act. Jo.*, in Tischendorf, p. 266; of healing the sick, *Acts* iii, 6; v. 16; xxviii, 8, etc.

For the Master here adds one last word which ought to electrify his soldiers: "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." The word "*I*" has here a decisive bearing. The Vanquisher of the world, of death, the All-powerful, Master of heaven and earth, as He has just declared, the Son of God, will be with His faithful to sustain them until the end of time. What else could they desire? Events have proved whether He has kept His promise.

Having spoken thus, the Master left His disciples happy and proud of what they had just heard.

The little Church felt herself reviving, and the hour was near when Jesus should find her compact enough to allow Him to depart once for all, and vigorous enough to engage in the great struggle at the solemn feast of Pentecost.

CHAPTER VII

CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION

THE RESURRECTION AND THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY—PROOFS OF OUR LORD'S DEATH—PROOFS OF HIS NEW LIFE—THE MIRACLE—THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE TOMB OF JESUS CHRIST.

THERE had not been any need of this series of apparitions for forty days in order to strengthen the disciples' faith in the Resurrection. We may say that ever since that Sunday evening when Our Lord manifested Himself to the assembled Apostles, all were convinced, with the exception of Thomas, and we can find no indication that their faith was shaken by later events. This is an important and decisive fact and it imparts to the various Christophanies, which, because of their visibly fragmentary character, are only the more difficult to harmonise in one united whole, a most irresistible probatory force.

However, we shall resume here, as a corollary of the preceding chapters, the method of proof which philosophy has at all times employed triumphantly to demonstrate the truth of the Resurrection.

This great miracle which puts the seal, as it were, on the long succession of prodigies that had filled the life of Our Lord, has an importance so clearly pivotal in the history of our religion, that, by the admission of all both believers and non-believers, if this miracle is true, everything is true, if it is false, everything is false, and, as

St. Paul says, there is nothing vainer than our Catholic faith.

This, therefore, is our thesis.

The Resurrection is *life* succeeding *death* in the same individual. It must be impossible to deny the reality either of the death that preceded the second life or of this second life that followed the death. When we have undeniably proved these two successive conditions in the same man, it is only by a miracle, that is to say, by the hand of God, that the one can be joined to the other, and the secret of an apparent contradiction be revealed. But, if a miracle—and such a miracle!—has by divine power sealed the entire work of Jesus, it is a proof that His doctrine was true, that His mission was divine, that He, as He had declared, was really God.

Rationalists, in order not to admit a miracle, have denied first the death [1] of Jesus, and again His return

[1] At the beginning of the last century Paulus of Heidelberg, taking up the position that the supernatural in the Gospel history must be got rid of, gave out the opinion that Jesus did not die on the cross, but simply swooned away. Medical science, which he invoked to sustain his thesis, was the first to destroy his system. He was informed that if Jesus had been taken down from the cross while still alive, he must have died in the tomb, as the contact of the body with the cold stone of the sepulchre would have been enough to bring on a syncope through the congelation of the blood, owing to the fact that the regular circulation was already checked. Besides, a man in a swoon is not revived ordinarily by being shut up in a cave, but by being brought out into the open air. The strong odour of aromatics in a place hermetically sealed would have killed a sick person whose brain was already seized with the most unyielding swoon. It is of no avail to attempt to meet these scientific arguments, nor is it possible to rebut the fantastic example borrowed from Herodotus vii, 94, and from Josephus *Vita*, 75, where, through medical care, of three crucified, one was brought back to life, or the assertion that, in a swoon, the third day is the critical day which brings on either definitive decomposition or complete return of life in the subject. After being renewed later on by certain rationalists who were greatly embarrassed by such a miracle, viz., Gfrörer, who was afterwards converted to Catholicism, Schleiermacher and Hase himself, the *Scheintod-Hypothesis* was for ever abandoned. Moreover, it was not enough for its defenders to say that Jesus, gradually reviving, had succeeded, by means of His medical resources, in effecting His cure. They had also to explain how it was that He had been seen, not in a state of convalescence, but transfigured in an exalted state, like the Van-

to life.[2] They say: "If He is risen, He was not dead, or if He died, He is not risen."

Two facts, one as certain as the other, throw light on this dilemma. The first is that on Friday evening Jesus was dead; and the second, that He appeared full of life on Sunday and on the days that followed.

That He was dead on Friday evening no one has doubted; neither in the Sanhedrim, nor in the Prætorium, nor on Calvary. Pilate alone was astonished that He had so soon given up the ghost, but his astonishment only called forth new testimony corroborating the assertion of those who asked for His body.

Therefore, friends and enemies, looking on the Crucified, saw clearly that He was no more. To prove it the better,

quisher of death and the Prince of life. And then what had been His end? Did the great Martyr retire to die unknown? They could not urge this without transforming Jesus into a kind of theatricality, who, on reaching the end of his difficult and perilous rôle, disappears to return to every-day life, leaving to those whom he has amused or deceived the work of applauding him. In our days, rationalists of every stripe reject this hypothesis, which is as absurd as it is odious, and all agree that the Crucified Jesus really died on Friday.

[2] His return to life is denied by all those who, from the chief-priests (*St. Matt.* xxvii, 62, etc.) and Celsus down to Reimarus (*Wolfenbüttel Fragments*) and Strauss in his later days (*The Old and the New Belief*, 1873), allege a fraud on the part of the disciples. Let us say here that this opinion, untenable as it is from any point of view, is now no longer defended. The most recent rationalists prefer the less vulgar, and more elastic and artistic theory of visions. According to this, Jesus rose again only in the imagination of His friends, who took a moral impression for a real vision. Already pointed out by Celsus, this explanation has been presented in its clearest light in France by MM. Renan and Réville, in Germany by Zeller, Holsten, Lang, Volkmar, Strauss in his *New Life of Jesus*, etc. Those who, like Ewald, Schenkel, and Keim, modify it by granting to the visions of the disciples an *objective* reality in heaven, but not on earth, are nevertheless unable to tell us how the sepulchre could have been found empty, and what had become of the body of the Crucified. It is not enough to represent the *spirit* of Jesus as acting from the kingdom of spirits, whither He had gone, upon the spirit of the disciples, they must explain where the body had gone which was seen no more either in the tomb or outside it, and which no one could have stolen. Their system, like all those that differ from the historical account given in the Gospel, runs foul of the stone of the empty sepulchre, and fatally undoes itself.

the centurion pierced Him with his lance, and the corpse made no motion. From the wound came forth a mixture of water and of blood, which revealed a rapid decomposition of the vital elements. Bleeding, they say, is fatal in syncope. Here it has not killed Him Who is already dead. For the circumstances in which it occurred prove that Jesus had ceased to live some moments before. And it does not occur to the most intelligent of His enemies, such as the chief priests, to cast a doubt on the reality of His death. All that they fear is fraud on the part of the disciples, who may remove the body, but not on the part of Jesus Whom they have seen expire. He was taken down from the cross, and just as He had shown no sign of life at the stroke of the soldier's spear, so now He lies still and cold in the loving arms that lift Him up, take Him away, embalm, enshroud, and lay Him in the tomb, after covering Him with proofs of their desolation and their love. Can we imagine a more complete swoon than this or one more suitably timed? Let us add that this would indeed be a most fortuitous ending of a life already, in itself, so prodigious in its sanctity and so fecund in its influence. This were an impossible coincidence! It were more miraculous even than the Resurrection itself! Let us say, moreover, that if Jesus had only swooned, He could not, without injury to His character, allow any one to believe that He had been dead. Instead of presenting Himself as one *risen again*, He should have said simply *preserved* by chance. In fact, here as everywhere else in the Gospel, we encounter this unsurmountable dilemma: either Jesus was the Just One, the Man of God, or among men He is the greatest of criminals. If He presented Himself as one from the dead, whereas He was not such, He is guilty of falsehood, and must be denied even the most common honesty.

Hence, rationalists generally have at all times preferred, out of respect for His character, to believe that He did not rise again from the dead. But, in so doing they encounter the pitiless tomb whose emptiness they can never explain,[3] and besides, the unanimous and unavoidable testimony of those who saw Him risen with their own eyes and touched Him with their hands. This testimony declares that Jesus was not in the tomb on Sunday; that He was seen in person, walking, eating; that He was heard speaking during the days that followed; that He presented Himself with a nature wholly different from an earthly, mortal nature; in a word, that He exercised the functions of human life as before His death, but with something more than during His life.

If Jesus, who had been laid in the tomb on Friday, was not there on Sunday, either He was removed or He came forth by His own power. There is no other alternative. Was He removed? By whom? By friends or by enemies? The latter had set a squad of soldiers to guard Him, therefore they had no intention of causing Him to disappear. Moreover, their prudence could not counsel this. This would have made the way too easy for stories of the resurrection which the disciples might invent. The wisest course was for them to guard Him as a proof. Thus they could reply to every pretension that might arise: "Here is the corpse, He is not risen."

As for His friends, they had neither the intention nor the power to remove Him. As for the intention, of what value

[3] The most recent criticism has been reduced to the suspicion of M. Réville, *Jésus de Nazareth*, Vol. II, p. 462, that the solution of this insoluble difficulty may well be found in one of the explanations current among the Jews, and ironically repeated in the peroration of Tertullian's treatise, *De Spectaculis:* "The gardener took away the body, fearing lest the multitudes going and coming might injure his lettuce." One can only be saddened by such pitiful suppositions, even in a book whose charm of style scarcely compensates for the lack of depth.

to them was the corpse of one who contrary to His promise, should prove unable to raise Himself to life again? What benefit could they hope for from such a fraud? Either Jesus was the Messiah, and would thus prove self-sufficient; or He was not, and then they could only despise the remains of this Master Who had deceived them or deceived Himself. As for the power, they would have to deceive a vigilant guard, remove the great stone which closed the tomb, take away the body, and all this without being seen. Not one of the disciples had had the courage to defend Him while He lived, and where would they find the hardiness to steal Him away now that He was dead? To face soldiers in an attempt to remove a dead body, was an act of audacity little in harmony with their pusillanimity. They did not deem themselves sufficiently safe even in their dwellings, for they kept their doors closed through fear of the Jews, and may we suppose them capable of going through the midst of an armed troop, waking or sleeping, it matters little, to execute such a theft with as much temerity as composure? It is not possible.

And yet on Sunday morning, as acknowledged by the Jews themselves, who sought to explain this disappearance, and on the unanimous testimony of the Apostles and the holy women, the sepulchre was empty, and the linens used in the burial alone were found there carefully folded up. How explain this prodigy?

If Jesus suddenly awoke from death, it is clear that He came forth of Himself and in triumph from the prison in which He was thought to be confined. If He did not awake, if no one sought or was able to remove Him, how did He disappear? In this we have the inexorable interrogation mark that must always embarrass those who seek their consolation in psychological theories which are more fantastic than they are serious, on love and imagi-

nation giving rise to visions and ascribing life to a dead man.

But we are able to adduce here something more than a merely negative argument. The positive argument itself is of overwhelming force. It is true Jesus was not seen rising again from the dead, but He was seen after He had risen, not once, but a great number of times; not from a distance, but near at hand, for His disciples touched Him; it is not one man only that saw and heard Him, but men and women who knew Him so well that they could not be mistaken, and on one occasion five hundred of them recognised Him.

All these witnesses attest it. It is the first basis of the Evangelical preaching.[4] They attest it in spite of persecution, and at the risk of their lives. To proclaim it to the world, in fact, they sacrifice their peaceful existence, the pleasures of home, their fatherland, in a word, their happiness, and beneath the lictors' scourge and axe, in the amphitheatre, in the midst of wild beasts, on the cross and funeral-pile, they cry out: "We cannot deny it, Jesus is truly risen"! What interest have they in dying for a lie? Is it the glory of founding a religion? Such a sentiment is beyond their simple education, or rather never entered their plain, uncultured minds. Is it the desire of honouring their Master? If the Master has deceived them, why should they feel bound to glorify Him? It cannot be admitted that they gave up their lives for a lie, the lie being, moreover, contrary to their dearest interests.

Shall any one say that the Apostles, becoming victims of an error of their senses or of the exaltation of their minds, died for what they thought they saw and not for what they did see? This would be to admit a phenomenon

[4] With this Peter begins his ministry to the Jews, *Acts* ii, 24; iii, 15, etc.; and Paul makes it the basis of faith: *I Cor.* iv, 14; xv, 15; *II Cor.* iv, 14, etc.

of the moral order that is absolutely impossible. It would imply that all had, at the same time, frequently undergone the same illusion without a single cool head or a single reasonable man being found among them. This is absurd. The more so since there is nothing in their conduct to betray them as visionaries. They are, on the contrary, very slow to believe, and of the Eleven there is at least one who determines to see and to touch. Thomas surrenders only to evidence, before the eyes of the other disciples. His obstinate incredulity abundantly proved that he did not allow himself to be moved by thoughtless enthusiasm. Illuminism would not have transformed Galilean fishermen into religious conquerors; if it exalts a man, it does not in reality augment his worth.

If the wish that Jesus had risen again caused the disciples to believe that He had really risen, and if the firm conviction that He had, made them believe that they saw Him, how may we explain that their visions, instead of being multiplied in proportion to the growth of their faith, suddenly ceased after the fortieth day?[5] What is this prophetic date to these poor souls who no longer find in their love or in their enthusiasm the power to resurrect

[5] The manifestation of Jesus to Paul on the road to Damascus is placed by the Apostle himself side by side with the other apparitions to the disciples before the Ascension. "He was seen," he says (*I Cor.* xv, 3–8), ". . . by James, . . . by the Apostles, and . . . by me." These various manifestations have, in fact, one point in common, which is the essential point, namely: the objective reality, the physical bodily presence of the Risen Jesus. Paul so clearly understands it in this sense that he concludes from it the resurrection of the body. If they differed in the condition of Him Who manifested Himself, this matters little in the present discussion. Before the Ascension the disciples saw the Risen One still living on earth, whereas Paul saw Him descending from the glory of heaven. But both contemplated Jesus really present. It was not a mere impression produced in Paul's soul that sufficed to overthrow his companions beneath the radiance of an extraordinary light. He Who appeared and spoke on the Damascus road was as really present to Paul as He had been to Cephas, to the Apostles, to the five hundred brethren, to James and to the others; but He was not in the same condition.

their Master? Yet neither love nor enthusiasm are dead in them. On the feast of Pentecost and during the following days, we find these dispositions, on the contrary, astonishingly increased. If Jesus no longer appears, it is not that He is not always in their hearts, but that He is no longer on earth, and it is vain to pretend that their desire to see was the cause of their visions.

But—and here we must resume an argument expounded above—even supposing that their love may have been able to cause their lamented Master to appear to them, shall any one say, too, that this love was capable of making His corpse disappear? In what way? Was it by a daring stroke on the part of enthusiastic men? Such a stroke was not possible, as we have shown already. Could enthusiasm do more on the part of those who had beheld the Crucified decomposing in the tomb? The Resurrection might have caused enthusiasm, but not *vice versa*. Let us not speak of an effect of the imagination. That means nothing. Men may think what they will, but they cannot make it so. Had such illuminati, filled with their strange and stubborn dreams, ever sought to affirm their faith in the presence of unyielding opponents, these latter would have referred them to the sepulchre, and there the most discouraging spectacle would have sealed their lips. The hypothesis of visions does not hold any more than the rest before the empty tomb. If Jesus is no longer there, since no one had any interest in removing Him, it is because He has indeed come forth of Himself; and this fact alone, as undeniable as it is conclusive, can account for the sudden, radical, definitive change in the souls and attitude of the Apostles. Without the Resurrection of the Master, it were impossible to connect in their lives the future with the past. The reality of the Resurrection admitted, everything is explained and everything is connected.

There is no longer an effect without its cause. The enthusiasm of the Apostles arises not from the discouraging spectacle of a buried corpse, but from the consoling sight of One risen from the dead.

The Church is, therefore, at once the fruit of the Resurrection as well as its living proof, as the Resurrection is the argument and proof of the divinity of the Church. These two great facts are a mutual support.

Strauss holds that there is nothing more impossible to admit than the resurrection of a man. He is mistaken. There is something more impossible. It is the religious and moral transformation of the world by one who was crucified, if this latter were not risen again.

From the tomb of an illuminate or of an impostor, from a pious theft committed by a few foolish men, from a rumour vaguely spread, upon the dry bones of a poor corpse, sprang up and grew, stronger than the fiercest storms and bearing the most marvellous fruits, the great tree of Christianity! To hold this were the extreme of absurdity.

BOOK III

Glory

THE ASCENSION

KING OF HEAVEN AND EARTH—JERUSALEM ON THE FEAST OF PENTECOST—THE REESTABLISHMENT OF ISRAEL—ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES—THE CLOUD OF LIGHT—THE APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM. (St. Luke xxiv, 50–53; St. Mark xvi, 19–20; Acts i, 3–12.)

THE disciples' stay in Galilee did not last a whole month.[1] Whatever good their souls may have experienced in rejoicing over the frequent appearances of the Master in a locality where everything appealed to their sympathies, the time came at last for them to return to Jerusalem. Just as they had received the command to leave the Holy City to go and renew their strength among their own mountains, so now they were invited to return to Judæa to await a supreme manifestation before the feast of Pentecost.[2]

[1] St. Luke in the *Acts* i, 3, tells us that between the first apparitions and the last there was an interval of forty days. We must take from this the week of the Passover, spent in Jerusalem, and several days which, passed in travel or in waiting in the Holy City, preceded the Ascension.

[2] As we have observed, this is not given in the Gospel; but, with the accounts of St. John and St. Matthew concerning the disciples' stay in Galilee, we can easily imagine the motives of their return to Jerusalem.

The little caravan assembled, therefore, composed of the Apostles, Mary the happy mother of Him Who was risen again, the brothers of Jesus who had been converted, and a large number of other believers whose names remained unknown.[3] A secret enthusiasm sustained them all. They looked forward to coming events that would prove decisive and in keeping with their most cherished aspirations. How different this journey to Jerusalem from that which had immediately preceded it! Then they were going to the martyrdom of the Master, but now they were to witness His supreme glorification.

Arrived in the Holy City, the Galilean proselytes found lodgings there as best they could, or even sought to conceal themselves in the homes of their friends on the outskirts. The Master continued to live on familiar terms in the midst of His disciples, sitting at their table, calling them together in special assemblies,[4] and speaking to them of the Kingdom of God, of its future, of the conditions in which it should develop through long and violent struggles unto ultimate victory. How sweet the joy that must have flooded their souls as their loving Master, risen and glorious, gave out to them, in His words or in the Eucharist, as of yore, the bread of life! Sufficient attention has not been given to this exceptional phase of Jesus' stay among His disciples. In the Book of the Acts, St. Luke, though mentioning it, gives only an incomplete idea of it. However, certain words in his Gospel may refer to this.

Jesus announced to them the near fulfilment of the Father's promise of which He had so often told them, and which was to transform them into new men. Their barks

[3] *Acts* i, 14.

[4] Συναλιζόμενος is the true reading. In the middle voice it signifies *having assembled, having grouped.* Some manuscripts have συναυλιζόμενος, *having lived with them,* and others, with still less probability, συναλισκόμενος, *sharing their manner of life, their food.*

and their nets were to behold them no more. They had finished with their beautiful country of Galilee, the sweets of family life, and their peaceful existence upon the lake. All the sacred ties that bound their hearts were broken once for all, or would soon be so. Henceforward for them there was no fatherland, no relatives, nothing but the will of the Master and self-sacrifice. The little Church must establish her domicile in the very centre of hostilities. Jesus commanded that she remain in Jerusalem, first that there she might receive baptism of fire, and also that there she might bravely take her stand in the face of Judaism, her persecutor. Directing their whole attention to the Scriptures, He added:[5] "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: And that penance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And I send the promise of my Father upon you. But stay you in the city, till you be indued with power from on high." "John, indeed, baptised with water, but you shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The disciples did not clearly understand this promise, but they rightly suspected that its fulfilment would be closely connected with the coming of the Kingdom of God. Often while walking or sitting with them, He gathered them around Him and spoke to them His last words of advice.[6] One day, when He had led them upon the Mount of Olives and in the direction of Bethany,[7] and while He spoke to them

[5] *St. Luke* xxiv, 45–49; *Acts* i, 5, *et seq.*

[6] The expression, συνελθόντες, in *Acts* i, 6, suggests that they were walking with Him or were grouped about Him.

[7] The text of *St. Luke* xxiv, 50, whether it be ἕως πρὸς Βηθανίαν, or ἕως εἰς, signifies simply that it was in the direction or on the road to Bethany. The topographical indication given in the *Acts of the Apostles* i, 12, naming the Mount of Olives as the place where Jesus had assembled His followers to give them His last blessing, in no way contradicts this,

thus concerning the future: "Lord," they said, with a joy revealed in the very phrasing of their question, "wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" What did they mean by this? After the sad scenes of the Passion, did they still hope to shake off the Roman yoke and to see Jewish domination spreading over the world? It were difficult to believe so, unless the announcement of the early coming of the Holy Ghost, the power from on high which was capable of overturning the world, gave them the hope that henceforward everything would be within their power, in the order of nature as well as in the order of grace.

However that may be, Jesus, instead of replying to their impatient curiosity, simply said: "It is not for you to know the times or moments which the Father hath put in His power. But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost, coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and even to the uttermost part of the earth." It is not necessary for the servant to know the day when it shall please the master to execute his plans; the soldier does not ask his

but confirms it, for one of the roads to Bethany crossed the summit of Mount Olivet. A tradition which is very old, inasmuch as it is sustained by St. Jerome (*Lib. Nom. loc. ex Actis*, at the word *Mons Oliveti*), after Eusebius (*Eulog. Constant.* ch. ix, and *Life of Constant.* iii, 41), and the Pilgrim of Bordeaux (*Itinera J. S.*, Vol. I, p. 18, Geneva, 1877), says that a most beautiful basilica had been built on the very spot where Jesus had ascended to Heaven. Destroyed and rebuilt several times, this basilica is, according to this tradition, the present Mosque of the Ascension. Cf. *Notre Voyage aux Pays Bibliques*, by Le Camus, Vol. I, p. 236. If, according to common belief, this site is authentic, the text of *St. Luke* xxiv, 50, ἕως πρὸς Βηθανίαν must not be translated "*in sight of Bethany.*" For the author has shown, from the mosque of Kefr-el-Tour, that Bethany cannot be seen unless by one who is high in the air. On the other hand, the distance between this mosque and the city is only about half as great as some have supposed to be indicated in *Acts* i, 12; but if we observe this text more attentively we shall see that St. Luke, desirous of informing Theophilus concerning the proximity of the Mount of Olives and not of the scene of the Ascension, says that this mount was a Sabbath-day's journey from the city.

general the time and place of the approaching battle. It is enough for each to know the task to be done and the route to be followed. Yet the Master's evasive reply lets them suspect that the day is near. For him who will perceive it, His mission on earth is ended. He has now only to retire and make way for the Organiser of the Kingdom Who is to come. As a result of His successive appearances and disappearances His disciples have become accustomed to the sense of His invisible presence; henceforth they shall be content with that. Besides, He cannot send the Holy Spirit until He has returned to His Father's side.

At this moment the glance of Jesus must have rested sadly on faithless Jerusalem, which had been the scene of His humiliation, just as it turned joyfully on the Apostles and the disciples who were the foundation of His hopes. He spoke no more, His arms were stretched forth in benediction. The disciples wondered what was going to happen. Then while His blessings fell from His lips, He Himself imperceptibly rose in the air, and His body was surrounded with a nimbus of glory.

The Son of Man was ascending to the divine state that belonged to Him, by right of nature as the Son of God, and by right of conquest, as the Saviour of mankind. A bright cloud enveloped Him.

Thus ended His history here below.[8] His Ascension was

[8] It is surprising that this final prodigy of the Ascension is recounted only by St. Luke and St. Mark, and the latter speaks of it only very summarily. The former mentions it briefly in his Gospel, but more in detail in the *Book of the Acts*. The two Evangelists and Apostles, St. Matthew and St. John, say nothing about it, and yet they had witnessed it. As a matter of fact, they suppose it in their writings. Thus in *St. Matthew* (ch. xxvi, 64; xxviii, 18) Jesus is represented as all-powerful in heaven and on earth, raised above the terrestrial sphere which we inhabit, and dwelling in eternal glory, which is the element of His omnipotence. St. John represents the Master as saying, after His Resurrection: "I ascend to my Father" and before this (ch. vi, 63): "If then you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He

the parallel of His supernatural conception. He Who had descended from heaven to earth returned from earth to heaven. The heavenly power which had come into Mary, to create in her the New Man, now raised up that Man, adorned with His sanctity, made beautiful by His sacrifice, glorious through His merits, and bore Him away into the dwelling of bliss.

The Ascension takes its place in the history of Jesus, as the natural consequence and the complement of the Resurrection. His body risen, freed from the limits of time and space, had passed into the spiritual state,[9] only to attain in final evolution towards the perfect life, its repose in glory. To sit at the right hand of the Father was for Jesus to take possession of His celestial royalty, and to continue at the same time His sovereign mediation between God and men. The Lord eternally glorious, the immortal Pontiff still saving the world by His unceasing supplication, His unfailing triumph was to be the recompense of His Messianic labours.

was before?" In the *Apocalypse* (i, 5–7), he always supposes that Jesus is seated on the throne of the heavenly city. (Cf. xi, 12.) Evidently the apostolical tradition contained no fact more universally acknowledged and accepted than this. Thus Peter is convinced that Jesus has ascended into heaven, and he affirms it in his discourses (*Acts* ii, 32–33) and in his *Epistles* (*I Peter* iii, 22). Paul is converted only by an apparition of Jesus glorified, that is, Who has ascended into heaven and descends again to transform into a lamb the terrible wolf that was devastating the Church. Hence, in many places in his *Epistles* (*Rom.* viii, 34; *Ephes.* i, 20 and ii, 6; iv, 8; *Coloss.* iii, 1) he alludes to Our Lord s Ascension. In the *First Epistle to Timothy* (iii, 16), he says that Jesus has been received into the glory of God. The *Epistle to the Hebrews* (ix, 24; x, 12) is no less explicit.

How then explain the silence of the two Evangelists? It is because the Ascension seemed to them the simple and natural corollary of the Resurrection. For them it was the last of the apparitions of the Master. But as they had neglected to recount many others, they thought they could pass over this one in silence. All the faithful knew that Jesus had one day spoken to them His last farewell, to go and take possession of eternal bliss; no one supposed that the Risen One could again be subject to death. But, if He could not die, it was because He had entered into glory.

[9] *I Cor.* xv; *II Cor.* iii, 17; iv, 4–6.

This work was immense; no analysis has yet included its whole contour nor all its ramifications. But in a general way it may be said that Jesus, being the Son of Man and the Son of God, had succeeded in raising humanity up to God and in bending the Divinity down to man. This is the great miracle in the history of the world.

Had He been but a son of man, He might have been able to acquire some individual virtues, even personal perfection, but with no other result than that of a good example given to the rest of mankind. He was THE SON OF MAN, that is, the New Man, the ideal and universal man, the second Adam bearing in His soul the humanity of the past and that of the future, Whose mission it was to purify all the aspirations of man and to restore to mankind its native grandeur by regenerating it by His life-giving word and the merits of His sacrifice. He was come to lead us back to the starting-point before the fall, and He has done so in a condition not only equivalent, but visibly superior. The Son of Man has raised man again so high that He can place him beside his God.

On earth He leaves him with full consciousness of his moral dignity, of his divine sonship, of his eternal destiny. What germs of individual and social transformation! Besides this, the law of life is promulgated for all, religious truth is common property, charity is aroused and spread over all parts. God was needed for this work, and indeed Jesus was God.

He called Himself not *a* Son of God; others may take that title which indicates only sonship by adoption, but *the Son of God*, He Whose like is not, the Only One, the Son from all eternity. He alone had said to God: *My* Father, leaving to others to say: *Our* Father, because He alone is, by nature, God and Son of God. To Him it belongs to reveal with authority the secrets of heaven, to

speak of the Father, to make Him known and loved. In Him, *God* and *man*, the two extremes, have met, God and man have embraced each other in supreme reconciliation.

Messiah, Redeemer, King, God, ascend to Thy triumph, Thy work is done and well done. Return to heaven, Thy Kingdom; watch over earth, Thy field of battle. Glorified on high by the angels, Thou shalt be defended, preached, adored here below by men. The former in beatitude, the latter in the throes of the struggle, shall cry again, with one enthusiasm, one joy, one love:

To The King Who is Seated upon His Throne,
To The Lamb Who has Saved the World
Blessing, Honour, Glory and Power
Now and For Ever!

The disciples, contemplating the sublime spectacle, were in a kind of ecstasy. Jesus had long disappeared upon His chariot of glory, but their eyes still sought Him in the lightsome train with which the air was filled.

Two men—they were angels, as was seen by their white garments, the symbol of their celestial purity—appeared in the heavens. There had been angels in Bethlehem to chant the glory of the God made man, and rightly were there angels on the Mount of Olives to tell the glory of the man become God. "Ye men of Galilee," they cried, "why stand you looking up to heaven? This Jesus Who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven."

Rejoiced at this consoling sight and full of enthusiasm, as if they had breathed, for a moment, the atmosphere of the heavenly city, the disciples returned to Jerusalem. There they retired to the Cenacle, that place of most cherished memories. They came forth from there to go

regularly to the Temple to praise God, and returned to wait in pious recollection until it should please the Master to indicate through the coming of the Holy Ghost, that it was time for them to begin the Evangelisation of the world.

Ten days later Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples, and the great struggle began.

THE END

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